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President	Mr. Cunningham	(United States of America)
Members	Bangladesh	Mr. Ahsan
	China	Mr. Wang Donghua
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
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	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Tunisia	Mr. Jerandi
	Ukraine	Mr. Kuchinsky
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock

Agenda

The situation in Guinea following recent attacks along its borders with Liberia and Sierra Leone

The situation in Sierra Leone

Letter dated 30 April 2001 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2001/434).

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

01-37081 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Tribute to the memory of the former International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) President, Judge Laïty Kama

The President: At the outset of this meeting, I should like, on behalf of the members of the Security Council, to express profound sorrow at the death of Judge Laïty Kama, who served as President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda from 1995 to 1999. At the time of his death, he was serving as the Presiding Judge in one of the trial chambers of the Tribunal. Judge Kama was highly respected by his fellow judges and was regarded as a father figure and a leader who played a crucial role in the formative years of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

On this sad occasion, I should like to convey to the Government and the people of Senegal and to the bereaved family the Council's profound condolences.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Guinea following recent attacks along its borders with Liberia and Sierra Leone

The situation in Sierra Leone

Letter dated 30 April 2001 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2001/434)

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend invitations under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations; Mr. Ibrahima Fall, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs; and Ms. Carolyn McAskie, Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Guéhenno to take a seat at the Council table.

I invite Ms. McAskie to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them a letter dated 30 April 2001 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council transmitting the report of the Inter-Agency Mission to West Africa, document S/2001/434.

I should like to draw the attention of members of the Council to document S/2001/353, which contains the text of a letter dated 11 April 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Mali to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting the final communiqué of the Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States, held in Abuja on 11 April 2001.

Today the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Guéhenno, Ms. McAskie and Mr. Fall.

At the end of those briefings, I will give the floor to Council members who wish to make comments or ask questions. I should like to invite them to indicate to the Secretariat if they wish to take the floor.

I now give the floor to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

Mr. Guéhenno: As requested, I would like to brief the Security Council on recent developments in Sierra Leone and in the subregion, including progress in the forward deployment of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), various meetings involving the United Nations, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), and actions taken or being envisaged by the parties and by UNAMSIL in implementing the decisions of the recent review meeting of the Abuja ceasefire Agreement.

First, I will touch on the political developments. Since our last briefing to the Security Council, the major political development was the meeting in Abuja on 2 May 2001 of ECOWAS, the United Nations, the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF to review the implementation of the Abuja ceasefire Agreement. The review meeting was preceded on 1 May by a meeting of the United Nations-ECOWAS-Government of Sierra Leone coordination mechanism.

The review meeting was chaired by the Foreign Minister of Mali and attended by UNAMSIL, the Government of Sierra Leone, and an RUF delegation led by Omrie Golley, Chairman of the RUF Political and Peace Council. The meeting, which was held in a frank but cordial atmosphere, resulted in a number of important conclusions and decisions, as follows.

It was concluded that the ceasefire Agreement had been largely observed, but that the Civil Defence Forces (CDF) had violated it by attacking the RUF in Tongo on 19 April. The Government of Sierra Leone should exert the necessary control over the CDF in order to avert future attacks which could jeopardize the peace process. The Government of Sierra Leone was called upon to extend its authority throughout the country in the wake of UNAMSIL's deployment.

There was a renewed commitment by the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF to remove all roadblocks in areas under their control. The RUF pledged to return, by 30 May 2001, all weapons and equipment it had seized from UNAMSIL and ECOMOG.

The meeting called for the simultaneous disarmament of the CDF and the RUF, and a decision was taken to set up a joint committee comprising UNAMSIL, the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF, to meet in Freetown on 15 May to develop a firm timetable and modalities for the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. The meeting also called on the RUF to release all abductees, in particular child combatants, and called on the two parties to create an atmosphere conducive to the safe return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

The review meeting also decided that in order to stop the RUF incursions and the Guinean attacks, the RUF would withdraw all its combatants from the Kambia district and allow the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) to deploy there. UNAMSIL, accompanied by unarmed RUF observers, would mount increased patrols in the district. The withdrawing RUF combatants would be disarmed and screened for absorption into the Sierra Leone army.

Confidence-building measures reached at the meeting include the Government of Sierra Leone's declared intention and preparedness to address the RUF's political concerns, including releasing some detained RUF officials; facilitating the complete certification of the RUF as a political party; and providing land or office space to the party in Freetown and in the provinces.

The Abuja meeting constitutes a step in the right direction. Obviously, the right balance will have to be struck between giving the RUF the opportunity to transform itself into a political entity, and maintaining a strong posture for UNAMSIL. On balance, we believe that, if properly implemented by both sides in good faith, the Abuja meeting has the potential to create the confidence needed to make further progress. It is a first step.

The Government has set up a high-ranking task force to oversee the implementation of the Abuja meeting. The members of this task force will also represent the Government at the meeting on the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme with the RUF, to be held tomorrow. The RUF, in a meeting with Special Representative of the Secretary-General Adeniji last Friday, 11 May, reaffirmed its commitments, but also stressed the need for more confidence-building measures. It also said it was ready to welcome the deployment of the Sierra Leone police in the areas now under the RUF's control.

During the period under review, ECOWAS leaders actively pursued their efforts to advance the peace process in Sierra Leone. On 11 April, an Extraordinary Summit meeting of ECOWAS Heads of State was held in Abuja. That meeting called on the Security Council to authorize and assist the deployment of the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) forces along the borders of Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia. It also set up a mediation committee, comprising the Presidents of Mali, Nigeria and Togo, to encourage dialogue between the Heads of State of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, and it decided to dispatch an ECOWAS mission to Liberia on 18 April to assess Liberia's compliance with the Security Council's demands in resolution 1343 (2001). I understand that the Permanent Representative of Mali has kept the Security Council well informed of these important developments.

(*spoke in French*)

I should now like to touch on follow-up actions by the parties and by UNAMSIL. In a meeting held at Makeni on 6 May, the RUF military leaders unanimously endorsed the Abuja decisions and established committees to oversee follow-up

implementation of these decisions. In subsequent meetings with UNAMSIL, RUF representatives reiterated their leaders' commitment to withdraw from Kambia on 18 May, to release at least 200 child combatants by 25 May, and to return all seized weapons by 30 May. These undertakings by the RUF are a positive development that need to be encouraged and very closely followed up.

It is worth noting that the withdrawal of all RUF combatants from the Kambia district would facilitate efforts at repatriating Sierra Leonean refugees from Guinea so that they can return home. Such a withdrawal would also set a positive precedent for the withdrawal of the RUF from other areas, particularly the diamond-producing areas.

On 9 May, UNAMSIL organized a meeting with the Government of Sierra Leone to prepare for the 15 May meeting between the RUF, the Government of Sierra Leone and UNAMSIL, which will clarify modalities and establish a firm timetable for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, in keeping with a decision taken at the review meeting of the Abuja ceasefire Agreement.

Turning to the deployment of UNAMSIL in areas being held by the RUF, I should like to inform the Council that, in keeping with its concept of operations, UNAMSIL deployed into RUF-held areas, notably Lunsar, Makeni and Magburaka, between 7 and 23 April. UNAMSIL has also continued to conduct long-range patrols into these areas, including three patrols to the Kono district, two of which took place at night, enabling the area to be approached from both the west and the east. One patrol was conducted from Magburaka to Koidu, Konkoworo, Saima and Koardu, which is 2 kilometres from the Guinea border. From the east, the Guinean battalion patrolled from Daru to Bumumbu, Benda Juma, Gandahun and Woama. Long-range patrols were also carried out three times to Kailahun from Daru, as well as to Buedu.

The local people have warmly welcomed UNAMSIL's deployment and patrols, which had an immediate and very positive effect on economic activities in the areas concerned and on the return of displaced persons. UNAMSIL is considering the establishment of a permanent presence in Kambia and Koidu.

The Pakistani contingent should start deploying at the end of this month, with the arrival of an advance party of 900 men. There will be several elements in the Pakistani brigade, and the full contingent of about 4,500 should be on the ground by early September. The Secretariat is also reviewing offers by Nepal and Senegal, in particular with regard to the equipment of their possible contingents.

(*spoke in English*)

I would now like to turn now to some ceasefire violations. UNAMSIL has received reports of clashes between the CDF and the RUF near Tongo fields on 19 April, and at Talia, 9 kilometres east of Mano Junction, on 6 May. UNAMSIL's investigations of the first report of a ceasefire violation determined that the RUF repelled an attack by CDF forces. At present, the situation in the area has been stabilized, and civilians that had fled to Kenema and Mano Junction have started returning to their villages. UNAMSIL is still investigating the second report of ceasefire violations.

Reportedly, the CDF had received orders from its leadership in Freetown to recapture the Kono district from the RUF. It should be borne in mind that the Kono district is a key diamond-producing area. The RUF has claimed that CDF attacks on their position in the Kono district were carried out with the assistance of Guinean forces. UNAMSIL has also received reports of artillery and helicopter gunship attacks by Guinean forces on RUF positions near the Sierra Leone-Guinea border. It is hoped that the withdrawal of the RUF from Kambia will bring these attacks to an end in that area. In the meantime, we call on all parties involved to exercise maximum restraint.

The extension of the authority of the Government of Sierra Leone throughout the country has continued. Members of the Council may recall that, in his ninth report on UNAMSIL, the Secretary-General stressed that the ongoing deployment of UNAMSIL troops is being undertaken for the principal purpose of facilitating the restoration of Government authority throughout Sierra Leone. As a result of UNAMSIL's constant pressure on the RUF, Government education and medical officials have conducted assessment visits, and national school examinations will soon be conducted in Makeni and elsewhere. The RUF also agreed to, and actually called for, the deployment of the Sierra Leone police force in Lunsar. The postal service is also in the process of being restored in Lunsar. However, the lack of resources and capacity on

the part of the Government remains a major constraint in the efforts to extend civil administration.

With regard to human rights, UNAMSIL forward deployment upcountry also involved the opening of the first human rights office in Kenema. This is part of the efforts to establish a permanent human rights presence in the provinces to undertake, *inter alia*, monitoring, reporting, training and capacity-building in human rights and international law, with emphasis on the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). In this regard, it is our intention to augment the human rights section of UNAMSIL from 14 to 20 professionals.

Significant progress has been made towards establishing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, with an initial assessment of the 54 nominations received for the four national positions, and the impending convening by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of his statutory advisers, representing the Inter-religious Council, the Council of Paramount Chiefs and the international community based in Sierra Leone. These advisers will assist him in drawing up a shortlist.

Meanwhile, the High Commissioner for Human Rights has identified three persons considered suitable as international members of the Commission and is currently ascertaining their availability. UNAMSIL is also working with human rights non-governmental organizations that have formed a TRC working group, in order to reinforce the feeling of local ownership. A sensitization campaign on the TRC is also under way.

On the issue of HIV/AIDS, I would like to point out that the United Nations is stepping up its efforts to raise the awareness of the troops on the ground with regard to the risks of HIV/AIDS. UNAMSIL has conducted sensitization seminars for its troops and distributed condoms throughout the force and will shortly be distributing HIV/AIDS awareness cards designed specifically for peacekeepers, in coordination with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS.

Finally, I should like to refer to my colleagues in the Department of Political Affairs and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Assistant Secretary-General Ibrahima Fall and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator Carolyn McAskie, who will brief members on the recommendations of the recent Inter-Agency Mission to West Africa and Ms. McAskie's mission to the countries of the Mano River Union, respectively.

The President: I now give the floor to Ms. Carolyn McAskie, Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator.

Ms. McAskie: I am very pleased indeed to brief the Council on my recent mission, particularly in conjunction with my colleagues Mr. Guéhenno and Mr. Fall, as I think this is a good example of how all parts of the United Nations Secretariat are working very closely to address the very complex situation that is developing in that region.

In accordance with the Council's request, we attempted to provide some maps through the use of the overhead projector, but this room does not lend itself to that; we tried, but they were absolutely impossible to read. We do have a map handout, which I have been told will be with us in a moment. I will have that circulated, hopefully while we are speaking.

Between 17 and 25 April, I visited the three Mano River Union countries of Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia. The primary objective of the mission was to make an assessment of the humanitarian situation in the subregion and to evaluate the humanitarian coordination mechanisms among and within the three countries of the Mano River Union. This was seen as essential in view of the regional dimension of the present crisis, the recent changes to the structure of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), as well as the findings of the visit undertaken by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the recent interdisciplinary mission to West Africa led by my colleague, Mr. Fall. In addition, the Secretary-General requested that, during my visit, I collect views and information relevant to this Council's request for a response to paragraph 9 of its resolution 1346 (2001), in particular on the question of how to take forward the issue of refugees and internally displaced persons in and around Sierra Leone, including their return to safe areas.

I was accompanied by one of our major donors, Ambassador Marika Fahlén, the Swedish Ambassador for humanitarian affairs, along with staff of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. I should add that I found it extremely useful for the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to travel to a

country such as Sierra Leone, where there is a major peacekeeping mission, and I am recommending that we do this more often.

In Guinea, we benefited from the fact that we arrived at the same time as the United Kingdom Secretary of State for International Development, Ms. Claire Short, and Mr. Charles Josselin, French Minister for Francophonie and Cooperation, who were visiting the region. Again, this was very useful.

I met with senior officials of all three Governments: in Guinea, the Prime Minister; in Sierra Leone, the Minister for Foreign Affairs; and in Liberia, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Planning and the Joint Presidential Committee on Humanitarian Affairs. In all three countries, I consulted, of course, as usual, with the United Nations country team, non-governmental organizations, local civil society and the media.

It is painfully evident that the regional approach being developed is absolutely the right one, particularly among the three countries of the Mano River Union. The major finding of my mission is the extent to which the crisis in each of the three countries is fuelling crises in the neighbouring countries. There is not a single border that is not affected, exacerbating the humanitarian crises with humanitarian consequences and making it painfully evident that the solutions to these crises must be looked at in an interrelated way.

Let me deal specifically with the three countries, very briefly. In Guinea, we found a nation which, after years of dealing with the spillover from the war in Sierra Leone and the cost of that, is now, unfortunately, facing a humanitarian crisis of its own, with numbers of between 200,000 and 300,000 internally displaced persons. The further deterioration of the situation in Liberia may well increase that number. We travelled to the Languette area — or Parrot's Beak, as it is known in Sierra Leone — Kissidougou and Gueckedou, and we visited camps in the region, including transit centres in Conakry.

What was painfully obvious, in addition to the regional nature of the crisis, was the fact that there is a real dearth of strategic information from one country to the next. We found that the lack of information inside Guinea as to what the situation is in neighbouring countries has often given rise to proposals for the full return of refugees to their countries of origin. Our assessment is that conditions for a return to Sierra Leone or Liberia do not exist at this time. We were very pleased to receive assurances from the Guinean Government that it is fully committed to meeting its obligations under the Convention for refugees and, in fact, is working very closely with UNHCR in its two-track approach. The two-track approach, of course, is the dual one of assisting refugees close to the border to relocate to secure areas deeper within Guinea, while providing assistance to those who are making their way voluntarily across the borders. In fact, UNHCR, with the full support of the Government of Guinea, has the exercise of moving refugees away from the Languette well under way; 40,000 have been relocated so far and they anticipate completing that some time within the next 10 days.

What we found, however, is that this relocation, along with news of an improved situation in Sierra Leone, has also spurred an increase in attempts by some to return to southern Sierra Leone via areas held by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). This is placing an enormous burden on the humanitarian community and in fact is creating serious difficulties for the refugees, who find that their return home is not an easy one. Refugees are being stopped as they cross through RUF territory, as the RUF is intent on registering them. We heard first-hand reports of goods being stolen and the United Nations on the ground is investigating the claims made by international non-governmental organizations that refugees have, in fact, actually been attacked.

Within Sierra Leone, I would say that there are five main issues which characterize the humanitarian situation. First, the community is trying to deal with the spontaneous returnees, including those who returned under a planned programme from Conakry to Freetown. About 55,000 have returned so far and we expect that those numbers could easily reach 100,000 over the next few weeks. The resettlement of internally displaced persons in their own villages that are now safe has begun, but, in addition, there is the potential for further displacement as the RUF withdraws from Kambia Continued relief will be needed for some 400,000 internally displaced persons within the country. Now, in an unfortunate irony, Sierra Leone is having to deal with an influx of Liberian refugees across the border into areas to which the humanitarian community has judged there to be no room for Sierra Leone refugees to return. Thus, we are trying to stop the flow of refugees from Sierra Leone into the south-

eastern part of the country and yet we are now faced with a potential influx of Liberians across the Mano River itself.

Within Sierra Leone, it will be recalled that the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General was recently appointed as Humanitarian Coordinator within UNAMSIL. This was a difficult decision, but is, in my mind, a very positive development. The Humanitarian Coordinator will need, however, to work very closely with those members of the humanitarian community who are non-United Nations to assure the broader humanitarian community that this does not mean any reduction of attention to their needs. The current individual has been requested to report back once he has been on the job for a few weeks, with a view to determining whether the presence of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs should be strengthened in support, given the fact that the Deputy Special Representative carries with his title a very long list of complex responsibilities, including issues relating to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and to governance.

What we found is that, over the past few months, there has developed a noticeably improved relationship between UNAMSIL and the humanitarian community, and we were very pleased to acknowledge this. The humanitarian operations have benefited somewhat from UNAMSIL logistics capacity. This is welcomed and we would look for opportunities to increase it.

The mission visited camps for internally displaced persons. We saw the first internally displaced persons returning to their own villages — a real sign of hope. We visited one of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration camps, though it had very few people in it, and we saw, in the South-West, some returned refugees being resettled in areas which are not their homeland, as their homes in the North are still behind RUF lines.

In Makeni, we met with the RUF leadership, Issa Sesay and his colleagues. The message that we gave to the RUF from the point of view of the humanitarians was to request free and safe access for humanitarian staff and freedom to undertake assessments and provide assistance without escort in these areas. I made it clear that the ability of the humanitarian community to access areas behind the RUF line would require not just their word, as they insisted that we would be safe, but tangible proof that this would be the case, as we have not, as members know, had good experiences in the past.

One of the issues we raised as a sign of good faith is the release of the child soldiers, as well as the girls. Whenever we talk about the child soldiers, I have asked the humanitarian community also to emphasize that girls are being abducted.

I just had word this morning that, apparently, the RUF has released 97 children to the non-governmental organization Caritas, in Makeni. I do not know how many are boys and how many are girls, but this first release of 97 children is a very good sign.

One of the issues for Sierra Leone that will be extremely difficult, with the strengthening of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and the hope for a return to a secure environment within the country, is the extent to which the Government will be able to resume services. The humanitarian community is already extremely overstretched; we have received about 25 per cent of the funds requested in the consolidated appeal, and we have been making another appeal for funds to assist in the humanitarian effort. What we have to remember is that, as the Government tries to restore services, government workers themselves are among the displaced: in the refugee camps in Guinea you find professionals and government workers, and the Government, at number 175, is already the lowest on the Human Development Index scale. That, plus the ravages of war, will mean that plans to reinstate government services as UNAMSIL moves forward will require enormous assistance to the Government: capacity-building and resources.

The situation in Liberia — unlike that in Sierra Leone, where you could say that there are strong signs of hope — is more one of growing despair. The sense was that the political and military situation was rapidly deteriorating. The Mission itself, in fact, remained in Monrovia as it was unsafe to travel to areas affected by the crisis. Newly displaced persons were featured on the front pages of the local papers every day, along with the country's preoccupation with the sanctions, particularly as we were there just a few days after the visit of the Chairman of the Council's sanctions Committee, Ambassador Mahbubani. We met with opposition parties as well as with members of the Mano River Women's Peace Network, all of whom are

seriously concerned about the possibilities of Liberia falling back into a state of civil war. It was reported to us that the two main rebel groups, ULIMO-K and ULIMO-J, which in the past have been fighting each other, had formed an alliance and that in response President Taylor is mobilizing the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, the group that was disarmed in 1997 and 1998.

There is fighting all along the border of northern Lofa county — the county that borders South-East Sierra Leone and South-West Guinea. That fighting has increased the number of internally displaced within Liberia; the figure we have been given is between 60,000 and 80,000, of which one third to one half have been created in the past three to four weeks. The Liberian Refugee, Repatriation and Resettlement Commission estimates that there are still, in addition, some 160,000 Liberian refugees in the region and about 75,000 Sierra Leone refugees in Liberia, of whom about 50 per cent are receiving assistance from UNHCR, while the rest are inaccessible. As I mentioned, some of the Liberians are now fleeing across the Mano river into Sierra Leone, and it is conceivable that some Sierra Leone refugees within Liberia may possibly return with them. The Government is appealing for assistance, and Liberia was covered in the West African regional consolidated appeal, which was launched a month and a half ago at Geneva. But so far we have received a very small amount: about 8 per cent of that appeal has been funded so far.

Let me mention one or two quick conclusions, and then one or two recommendations from the visit. First of all, I have thrown out a lot of numbers. The numbers are extremely confusing; they change from week to week, they change as people move; and they change as we get better access and as we estimate better. So I apologize if the numbers that members have now are not the numbers they had before; that is the reason: when you are dealing with problems of displacement, that is the risk we run. The overall estimate, however, is that with refugees and displaced persons, we are dealing with something between 1 million and 1.5 million people in the three countries of the Mano River Union.

As I said at the outset, the Mission confirmed the need for the United Nations to address the situation in that part of the world from a perspective fully informed by the regional dynamic. An understanding of the regional interplay among the three countries members of the Mano River Union is critical to addressing the volatile humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone, Liberia and now, unfortunately, Guinea.

In that connection, we confirmed that coordination, information exchange and analysis required strengthening not just on a country basis but on a regional basis. Assistance needs are still extremely high, not just for refugees but for the growing number of internally displaced persons.

While events in Sierra Leone give cause for encouragement, developments in the two neighbouring countries give much cause for concern. And the encouraging news in Sierra Leone brings its own problems: the problems of the reinstatement of Government authority and the enormous costs that will go along with that if we are to sustain the growing security in the country.

In terms of the recommendations of the Mission, it is our recommendation that a subregional capacity should be established by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to provide mechanisms to facilitate the exchange and analysis of strategic information, including Geographical Information System (GIS) data, on developments in the subregion between the United Nations and its partners in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia, and to support subregional contingency planning and resource-mobilization efforts. That presence should be linked to the proposed United Nations office for West Africa, although, depending on the ultimate location of that office, the OCHA element need not be co-located with the political office, as the OCHA office must be based in one of the countries in crisis.

There is also an urgent need to enable United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations to provide aid to internally displaced persons and host communities through funding of the consolidated appeal process for West Africa and UNHCR. I would also add that there is a need for donors to support the Mano River Women's Peace Network as part of the effort. We talk a lot about the role of women in peace-building, and here we have an opportunity to do something practical about it.

In addition, OCHA will strengthen its presence in Guinea and in Liberia, and recommends very strongly that the international community continue to support

UNHCR's two-track approach for Sierra Leone refugees in Guinea.

Finally, pending the resolution of the mechanism to ensure increased access to UNAMSIL logistics capacity for humanitarian actors, we are calling on donors to increase their support for the World Food Programme (WFP) logistics operation in Sierra Leone. The relief agencies use WFP helicopters for assessments and medical evacuations.

Finally, funding is needed also to build the Government's capacity to extend basic services to newly liberated areas. The grave situation of internally displaced persons, refugees and other vulnerable communities is exacerbated by endemic poverty and inadequate government capacity, as well as by the chronically low international response to appeals for international assistance.

The President: I give the floor to Mr. Ibrahima Fall, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

Mr. Fall (*spoke in French*): Members of the Council will recall that on 10 April, following the Mission I had the privilege of leading to West Africa, I had a first opportunity to brief the Council on that Mission and to share the details of its terms of reference, its planning, its unfolding, and its major findings.

We have often described the West African project as consisting of three essential aspects: the Mission itself, the report and, finally, the implementation of the recommendations. We could say that today we are at the most critical phase of this three-part project. That is, the time has come to implement the recommendations contained in the report.

This is why the Task Force that was set up by the Secretary-General even before sending the Mission to West Africa is in the process of continuing to meet and reviewing the practical ways and means of implementing the recommendations. This is also why we have been in communication with the major potential partners and have sought their viewpoints on the implementation of the recommendations so that from the outset there can be a dialogue with all those involved in implementing the Mission's recommendations.

The recommendations that have been submitted to the Council cover several aspects. Some of them come within the direct purview of the Security Council, and today I would like to focus my briefing on the recommendations that are of direct interest to the Security Council. Our departments, services and agencies are currently identifying who can be responsible for which recommendations, in accordance with what timetable and on the basis of what practical modalities.

In this connection, I would like to emphasize three categories of recommendations that are of direct interest to the Security Council. The first is recommendations on the impact of conflicts on four West African countries, most of which are to be found in the Mano River Union. Thus, I think that these recommendations are complementary to the briefings just made by my colleagues. The second category of recommendations includes institutional arrangements made by the Inter-Agency Mission. Finally, the third category of recommendations relates to issues that transcend borders and that call for the Security Council's special attention.

The first category relates primarily to the current deadlock in the dialogue among the various heads of State in the Mano River subregion. The Council will recall that, as Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno has just said, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) recently held a summit in Abuja, and it established a mediation committee at the level of heads of State, including those of Mali, Togo and Nigeria. These heads of State were chosen because Mr. Konaré is the current Chairman of ECOWAS, Mr. Eyadema is the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and Mr. Obasanjo is the President of the country most involved in peacekeeping in West Africa. I must note that, in spite of this initiative, it has not yet been possible to have the three heads of State sit down at the same table for discussions. Even the idea of organizing a preparatory meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of these three countries has not received a positive response from all the potential partners. This means that the situation has continued to deteriorate since the time of the Mission that I led to West Africa. In the report we suggest that the members of the Security Council, together with the members of ECOWAS, see to it that such a dialogue can be established. That is why I reiterate this recommendation, especially to members of the Security Council that might have some influence on one or more of the heads of State concerned. It is obvious that the

deteriorating military situation, especially with the worsening of the situation in Liberia, now allows us, paradoxically, to begin a dialogue on a basis that might be much more durable. Along with this, it would be desirable for the Security Council once again to appeal to and urge the three heads of State to open a dialogue.

The second aspect focused on in the report is the situation in Sierra Leone. After the briefings given by my two colleagues, I shall not address the relaunching of the peace process or the humanitarian situation, except perhaps to emphasize that within the framework of the outcome of the recent Abujan Summit, which has opened there a window of opportunity for relaunching the peace process, it is important to plan elections in Sierra Leone at the end of the year, taking into account all dimensions and implications. In fact, the Mission was of the view that due to the prevailing situation in Sierra Leone it was, at the very least, premature to consider organizing elections in Sierra Leone by the end of the year, for much of the country is under de facto rule by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and much of the population consists of internally displaced persons and refugees abroad.

Regarding Guinea, the Mission suggested the holding of an international conference to mobilize funds in order to help Guinea cope with its humanitarian and social situation. The Council will recall that in 1999 an initial round table was held. Unfortunately, the plan to hold a second international conference did not materialize, first of all because of the prevailing political situation in Guinea, and also because of the deteriorating situation in the Mano River Union. The Mission is of the view that in the face of the current threat to stability in the country, and because of the long-standing impact of refugees there, where they make up as much as 10 per cent of the total population, Guinea, which furthermore has been making outstanding efforts to improve its macroeconomic situation — as the Bretton Woods institutions acknowledge — deserves greater support. This is why the Mission reiterates its proposal to hold such an international conference.

With regard to Guinea-Bissau, which is geographically outside the Mano River Union, the prevailing precarious and unstable situation in the country resulted from a lengthy crisis that occurred in three stages — the overthrow of the legal Government of President Nino, the establishment of a long period of transition dominated by the military and, finally, the organization of presidential and legislative elections to install a new regime — and has left its mark on the economic and social structure of the country. Political instability in particular continues. There is also economic instability due, on the one hand, to the decline of the country's resources, especially the price of cashews, which has fallen 40 per cent on the international market, and further, to the fact that donors have not followed up the commitment they made in 1998 to assist the country. The situation is extremely fragile. We believe that because of this, and because of the traditional conditions imposed by financial institutions on countries emerging from crises, it is important to organize an international conference on financing for development and for urgent humanitarian needs in Guinea-Bissau.

Finally, with regard to Côte d'Ivoire, the Mission determined that the economic situation should be taken into account not just as it exists in the country but also as it has effects beyond its borders. That is to say, account must be taken of the economic impact of the Côte d'Ivoire on other countries of the subregion in general and on those of the West African Economic and Monetary Union in particular, as Côte d'Ivoire's economy represents 40 per cent of the economic power of the Union. That is why the Mission proposed here that — in tandem with the pressure and influence exerted upon the Government of Côte d'Ivoire to bring it to engage effectively in a dialogue leading to national reconciliation — it is important to ensure that the economic and financial crisis of Côte d'Ivoire not be made worse so as not to further exacerbate its effect on the Economic and Monetary Union. That is also why we have also called here for assistance from the international community.

It turns out that since our Mission ended, the international commission of inquiry set up by the Secretary-General has also returned to New York. It is now in the process of drafting its report and conclusions on the grave violations of human rights that took place during the presidential election. The commission believes that it should be able to submit its report by the end of the month. Nothing in the talks we have had with the Chairman of the commission interferes with the proposal our Mission has made for the holding of a meeting in support of Côte d'Ivoire.

Those are the recommendations in the first category. With regard to recommendations in the second category — namely, those having to do with

institutional arrangements — there are essentially two types.

First of all, the Mission proposed the establishment of a United Nations office for West Africa. This is the logical result of the overall approval garnered for the idea the Council itself initiated after its mission to the countries of the Mano River Union last October. The mission received guidelines from the Secretary-General to consider an overall subregional and integrated approach to West Africa's problems, rather than continuing to act on a sectoral and country-by-country basis. Following the general approval for such an approach, we proposed the establishment of a United Nations office for West Africa. The competencies of that office were clearly set out in the report and in the recommendations, so I do not feel there is a need to revisit them.

Since the Mission took place we have shared the report with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the World Bank, the European Union, United Nations country teams in the field and other partners. We have done so in order to get their views, observations and recommendations with regard to implementing the proposal to create a United Nations office for West Africa. Of course, comments and concerns may be expressed with regard to the risk of bureaucratization of that office. The Mission has clearly thought about all the implications of setting up such an office. The office should have as its principal role gathering, harmonizing and using the synergies that exist between United Nations bodies already in the field and other partners so as to create the dynamics for an overall, integrated approach to cope with West Africa's priority needs. This is why the Mission believes that the office should not simply be an office that swallows up funds, but one which would have the minimum number of necessary staff. We hope that the Council will express to the Secretary-General its support for the creation of the office.

The second recommendation of an institutional nature is to create an inter-agency working group. As I have said, such a group already existed before the Mission's trip to the field. But there is today a need to give it a much more solid foundation, as there is a need to deal with the economic and financial consequences of such an expanded base.

Those are the institutional recommendations. I now come to the last category of recommendations, those having to do with the most important trans-border questions.

The first recommendation has to do with peacekeeping and security operations in the Mano River Union region. In that regard, during our Mission we took note of concerns expressed by ECOWAS heads of State facing the need to envisage, in the overall context of an integrated approach, the peacekeeping and security operations in particular in the region of the Mano River Union, in a way that takes the interrelationships into account. I need not repeat here what was said by Ms. McAskie, who a while ago stressed the need to take into account the humanitarian aspect in this interrelationship and who believed that it would be difficult to deal with humanitarian problems on a country-by-country basis.

It is exactly in that context that we must place the proposal made by several of our interlocutors, and which we echo, to expand the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) to include Guinea and Liberia. According to those with whom we spoke, doing so would not only help in dealing with the problems of Sierra Leone but would also create the necessary conditions for monitoring the situation on the borders between Guinea and Sierra Leone and Guinea and Liberia.

The Mission had no doubts about the very controversial nature of this proposal and felt itself duty-bound to report on it to those concerned. Since our arrival, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs have worked together on this idea, which will require further analysis. But we should recall once again that the proposal was made in the context of an integrated subregional approach, which was the reason why our mission was sent to the field.

The second recommendation concerns national reconciliation. Many of us have noted that, in most of the countries of West Africa, it is the absence of dialogue and national reconciliation that has led to marginalization and exclusion, which in turn are conducive not only to triggering conflicts but also to aggravating existing ones.

For all of these reasons, we believe that the United Nations Office for West Africa should focus its conflict-prevention and conflict-settlement activities on

the issue of national reconciliation. In this connection, we were struck by the decisive contribution made by women's movements to the promotion of negotiated settlements, in particular among member States of the Mano River Union. In her report, Ms. McAskie stressed the role of women's organizations, so I do not need to dwell on this any further.

I would, however, like to note that goodwill is the only resource available to these women's organizations. They are cruelly lacking in funds and in capacity. Aware of the impact they might have on the process of the prevention and settlement of conflicts, I cannot fail to appeal to the international community as a whole, and to the Council in particular, for consistent assistance to these civil society groups.

The third element is disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. Our mission was struck by the criticism made in West Africa of the United Nations. It was said that we tended to arrive too late and to adopt mandates that were not in keeping with realities, and that, as soon as a peace agreement was concluded, we were too hasty in withdrawing. Finally, and most importantly, it was said that the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement process was very often botched because of a lack of financial resources.

Those we spoke with noted that, both in Liberia and in Sierra Leone, the aborted disarmament and demobilization process was one of the reasons for the resumption, prolongation or worsening of conflicts in West Africa. Indeed, abandoned to their fate, the ex-combatants, most of them young people, after a few months' wait have no other option than to take up arms once again. Moreover, in an economic environment of absolute poverty, if a consistent reinsertion and rehabilitation programme is not contemplated, there is a real risk that the international community, rather than being part of the solution to the problem, could be responsible for its aggravation.

That is why we appeal for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process to be considered in a much broader context. It should be considered from a geographical perspective, so as to involve countries that are interconnected, as is the case with the Mano River Union, but also from an economic and social perspective, in order to contemplate the long- and medium-term reinsertion, of the former combatants, especially young boys and girls.

In this connection, I should like to remind the Council that one of the conclusions reached the Abuja meeting, to which Mr. Guéhenno has just referred, concerns the resumption of the demobilization and disarmament process in Sierra Leone, and the fact that perhaps lessons should be learned, so that this time sufficient resources can be allocated to this process.

The next element concerns the proliferation of arms. This is a well-known issue, and, as we are only a few weeks away from the holding here in New York of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, let us simply recall the efforts made in West Africa by ECOWAS in the framework of its moratorium to stop the circulation of arms and monitor them.

That is why the mission proposed that States Members of the United Nations, and in particular members of the Security Council, become more involved with ECOWAS in this process. The mission even proposed that sanctions be considered against those States that might contravene this moratorium, be they States in the subregion or States that provide arms outside the region.

The penultimate point on which specific cross-border proposals have been made is the problem of peacekeeping operations. Here we wish to emphasize in particular the circumstances under which several West African countries have been urged to take part in peacekeeping operations. In this connection, we wish to reiterate what was said by most of those we spoke with: that the United Nations propose to West African countries, when they take part in peacekeeping operations, that they choose the option whereby it is up to the countries themselves to provide troops, but up to the United Nations to provide the equipment. This is what we call "dry" leasing. This option is much more in keeping with the financial resources available to the countries of the subregion. Experience in Sierra Leone has shown that those countries that opted for "wet" leasing were not able to comply with their obligations regarding equipment levels.

Since our arrival, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has been considering this issue, with a view to further discussions. We hope that those discussions will give rise to proposals that might finally solve this problem — which, as a matter of fact, is often used as a reason for saying that West African

countries do not have the necessary equipment to take part in peacekeeping operations.

Finally, a last proposal on cross-border matters. The United Nations Office in West Africa should strongly focus on the question of good governance and human rights, especially in the context of the prevention, management and settlement of conflicts and of post-conflict peace-building. Indeed, human rights violations and poor governance often serve as the trigger for crises. In this context, it is important for the United Nations office, working together with ECOWAS institutions, to play a much more active role in terms of preventive diplomacy.

Those are a few of the major recommendations made by the Mission that I had the honour of leading — recommendations relating to the countries particularly affected by the crisis in West Africa, recommendations of an institutional nature, and cross-border recommendations on priority issues in West Africa.

The President: I thank Mr. Fall for his briefing and his summary of the Mission's recommendations.

I would now like to open the floor for discussion and comment by members of the Council.

Mr. Ouane (Mali) (*spoke in French*): I should like first of all to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing a public meeting of the Security Council to consider the overall situation in West Africa. In this regard, we are grateful to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and Ms. Carolyn McAskie, Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, for their very useful statements. They both described a situation that has already been set out in a straightforward and lucid manner in the excellent report provided by Mr. Ibrahima Fall, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

On the one hand, the report shows very clearly that the problems facing West Africa are not only national, but transnational in nature, as the repercussions of the Sierra Leonean conflict fully demonstrate. On the other hand, it clearly identifies the enormous development needs in the subregion and formulates practical, relevant and, we believe, viable recommendations.

I should like, on the basis of those two observations, to emphasize the elements that my delegation believes deserve special attention within the context of our discussion today.

First of all, there is an urgent need to resolve the question of refugees and displaced persons. This matter was clearly set out by Ms. McAskie, and I would merely like to emphasize that we, too, believe that it is imperative to guarantee safe access to refugees and to promote conditions to facilitate their return to safe areas in their countries of origin. In this context, we support the recommendation on strengthening the presence in Guinea and Liberia of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs with a view to supporting efforts to meet the growing humanitarian needs in the West African subregion. Neither can we fail to endorse the appeal to the international community and the Governments concerned to support the actions of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to facilitate the relocation and voluntary return of Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea.

I wish to focus on the need to find lasting solutions with regard to the priority needs and problems of West Africa.

First of all, there is a need for peace. As Council members know, for more than a decade the West African subregion has been convulsed by many conflicts whose repercussions include, in particular, the progressive deterioration in relations between countries in the Mano River Union. I shall not repeat here all the initiatives and actions taken by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to try to resolve these conflicts. I shall confine myself to stressing the commitment of ECOWAS to finding a comprehensive political solution involving all the countries concerned and their partners. I should like, in passing, to thank Mr. Guéhenno and Mr. Fall for speaking about this.

Thus, with regard to the situation in Sierra Leone, it is important — as stipulated in Security Council resolution 1346 (2001) — that all the parties to the Sierra Leone conflict intensify their efforts towards the peaceful implementation of the Abuja Ceasefire Agreement of 10 November 2000. That reference is important to us, because we also believe that military pressure is not enough to bring about a lasting solution to the Sierra Leonean conflict and its worrying consequences, in particular the continuation of armed

raids along the borders of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

As we know, however, peace is not just the absence of war. There must also be a viable political and economic framework, that is, the construction and consolidation of a State based on law, the promotion of education and health policies and measures to combat poverty — in short, good governance.

In this regard, it is necessary to strengthen security and promote economic development within each country as well as among the countries in the subregion. In this context, it is essential to strengthen the local conflict-prevention capability, in particular through the Mano River Women's Peace Network, which Ms. McAskie mentioned, and, more generally, through the ECOWAS early-warning mechanism, which is designed to collect and process data through offices opened in Banjul, Cotonou, Monrovia and Ouagadougou, and its Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Small Arms and Light Weapons in West Africa.

It is also essential to provide the countries concerned with a means of speeding up the peace process, in particular by implementing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. This was the case in Mali, for example, where, in the wake of an armed rebellion in the north of the country, the authorities helped to integrate former rebels into all areas of the Administration and the national army and to reintegrate them through a new policy of decentralization and the financing of effective development projects.

That notwithstanding, the report of the Inter-Agency Mission sketches out a comprehensive, regional and integrated approach to all these questions, which we fully endorse. We support the recommendation to open a United Nations office for West Africa, which could act as the eye of the United Nations in the area and facilitate useful dialogue with bilateral and multilateral partners, as well as with ECOWAS, in particular in relaunching the peace process and the process of economic development in West Africa.

We are pleased that the report also stresses the need to further develop coordination and cooperation between the United Nations and ECOWAS with a view to establishing a true partnership, particularly given the regional implications of the Sierra Leonean conflict. In this regard, we believe that it would be useful to look further at the ECOWAS recommendation on broadening the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). We must respond positively and specifically to the ECOWAS offer of May 2000 to strengthen UNAMSIL by the addition of 3,000 men, who would have the advantage of knowing the terrain and would be able to deploy rapidly and effectively.

Likewise, the political support of the United Nations — in this case, the Security Council — and the provision of material and technical assistance by the international community are essential for the successful implementation of the ECOWAS initiative to deploy a multinational ECOWAS Monitoring Group force along the borders of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

I would also note that close cooperation between the United Nations and ECOWAS is necessary to ensure implementation of the sanctions laid down against Liberia in resolution 1343 (2001).

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for having sent the Inter-Agency Mission to West Africa. I also wish to thank Mr. Ibrahima Fall and members of that Mission for their important work in the search for lasting solutions to meeting the priority needs and issues of West Africa. We await with interest action on specific measures and recommendations of the Mission's report that are practical, relevant and viable. ECOWAS is ready to play its part in that work.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): We have had three very valuable briefings this morning and I, too, am very grateful for those, which were based on some very recent experience of all three briefers in the region. I will go through each in turn, very quickly.

Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno mentioned the good progress made at the meeting between the Committee of Six of the Mediation and Security Council of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Government of Sierra Leone, the United Nations and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) at Abuja on 2 May. We very much appreciate the role of ECOWAS in facilitating that meeting and are very grateful to Ambassador Ouane for his further updating this morning.

I want to say by way of background that the United Kingdom remains absolutely determined and committed to bringing peace to Sierra Leone and its neighbours through its support for the Government of Sierra Leone, the United Nations and the international community's efforts in the subregion. We have already committed several hundred million dollars to that objective and we are not going to stop looking for a result from that investment in terms of the stability and the orthodox development of Sierra Leone and its neighbours — what Ambassador Ouane referred to this morning as "good governance" throughout the region. We therefore welcome the RUF's renewed commitment at what we call "Abuja II" to complying with the terms of the Abuja ceasefire Agreement of 10 November and its agreement to withdraw from Kambia. The RUF's agreement to allow the Sierra Leone army, in coordination with the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), to deploy to the border area between Sierra Leone and Guinea will reduce tensions in that area. It is an important step in protecting the territorial integrity of Sierra Leone and in calming the situation in south-western Guinea.

We hope now to see the immediate reinvigoration of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme in Sierra Leone and, in this regard, we look forward to hearing the outcome of the meeting in Freetown on 15 May between UNAMSIL, the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF, because that meeting needs to lead to immediate results on the ground. The onus is on the RUF to prove to the international community that it is genuinely committed to peace and we want to see visible evidence soon that the RUF is complying with the provisions of the Abuja agreement of 2 May, namely, freedom for UNAMSIL deployment throughout Sierra Leone to re-establish the authority of the Government of Sierra Leone, immediate disarmament, and the handing back of weapons and ammunition seized from the ECOWAS Monitoring Group last year — something that should have happened six months ago. We hope that it will indeed be complete by 30 May.

I have a couple of questions here for the Under-Secretary-General. First of all, does he think that the trend that he is now observing in Sierra Leone with these agreements and their hope for implementation is in line with our expectations that the situation can improve sufficiently for elections, an essential part of the peace-building process in Sierra Leone, to be held at least within the next 10 months or so? I have a second question of detail as regards the alleged Civil Defence Forces (CDF) attacks on RUF positions in the east of Sierra Leone. Is it actually clear that the CDF were responsible for those attacks, because there is some doubt about the actual events that have taken place? We say that against the observation that the RUF has, of course, consistently failed so far to implement the Abuja ceasefire Agreement.

I am particularly grateful, also, to Carolyn McAskie for her presentation. The United Kingdom remains very concerned about the regional humanitarian situation and sees a strong need for increased coordination. We agree that this meeting exemplifies that. We are aware of the growing numbers of internally displaced persons, especially in Guinea, and think it essential for the humanitarian effort in Guinea to be strengthened by the appointment of a Humanitarian Coordinator in Conakry. Is there a date for that? We also need a clearer idea of the number of refugees still to be relocated within Guinea from the conflict zones and a timetable for completion of that exercise. We are interested in the idea of a subregional office for the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Are there plans to set that up on a particular timing?

We, too, note in passing her reference to the impressive and senior membership of the Mano River Union Women's Peace Network and we agree with the link which Assistant Secretary-General Fall has made between national reconciliation and the potential impact of such civil society organizations as that one.

I thank, too, Assistant Secretary-General Fall for his briefing and for his leadership of the Inter-Agency Mission to West Africa. The Mission report presents a vivid illustration of the need for a more collective and integrated United Nations effort, where economic development and humanitarian dimensions are factored into the United Nations system's analysis and response — in other words, a real regional strategy for West Africa. Many of his recommendations reinforce the general findings of the Brahimi report in this context and build on recommendations outlined in the report of the Council's mission to Sierra Leone last October. I have said before that we support the setting-up of an integrated mission task force for that subregion and we hope that this proposal will now be followed up urgently.

Worthy of particular note in his report was the message conveyed to the Mission by the heads of State of the region, who thought that greater subregional integration in the political, security, economic and social spheres should remain a key objective for the United Nations family if durable solutions to conflict and to the tragic humanitarian suffering that accompanies conflict are to be secured. More and more, we are seeing evidence of the need to strengthen regional and subregional institutions in preventing conflicts and developing comprehensive responses to shoring up peace-building efforts. The Fall report underlines this; and yet, we agree with his impression of a recent deterioration in relationships between neighbouring countries in the Mano River Union region. There clearly needs to be more intensive action on this.

The report contains a number of recommendations which affect the operational arm of the United Nations effort in West Africa. These recommendations merit serious and careful consideration and the United Kingdom is already reviewing them. We have noted the report's findings on coordination and strategy and we hope that this important analysis and assessment will be matched by a serious effort on the part of the United Nations intergovernmental machinery to take stock of their implications and to determine how we can best respond collectively to these challenges.

The capacity of ECOWAS as the regional institution is an essential aspect of this. The Fall report calls for the strengthening of ECOWAS in those areas which should better enable it to act as a driving force towards subregional integration and for greater cooperation between the United Nations system and ECOWAS. We should consider how we, as a Council, might develop a more operational relationship within ECOWAS. Here, I hope that the European Union will pay careful attention to the recommendations in this area. It is time, I think, for some individual donors also to see what specific help they can be giving to the regeneration of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) as an operational institution.

We welcome the proposal for a United Nations office for West Africa, but it is important that it be complementary to, and not reduce, the flexibility and responsiveness of the command structure of a United Nations mission in the region, such as UNAMSIL. In addressing the appalling humanitarian situation in the Mano River Union countries, the Fall report recommends the expansion of UNAMSIL's functions and mandate. I note that there was no representative of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on the Fall Mission. I have to say that, given the history of UNAMSIL and the need for concentrated action on the security situation in Sierra Leone over the next few months, expansion of the mandate is probably not a good idea at this stage. There needs to be intensive political and diplomatic work to restore the relationships among Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone before we can consider an expanded peacekeeping operation. That intensive work should be taken forward within an ECOWAS framework.

As Ms. McAskie made clear, the humanitarian situation in Liberia is fast deteriorating. It is now more important than ever that President Taylor and the Liberian Government comply with the demands in resolution 1343 (2001). The Council has made clear its resolve to ensure that they do so, and we will need to follow up energetically. We are not yet confident that President Taylor has got the message of the need for 100-per-cent compliance with that resolution. Sanctions will be lifted as soon as the Council is satisfied that its requirements have been met. In the meantime, it is essential to ensure that the arms embargo, the travel ban and the diamond embargo are made to bite. We call on all United Nations Members to fully implement and enforce those measures; it is important that the Liberia sanctions Committee should swiftly designate the list of those subject to the travel ban. We welcome the fact that the expert panel on Liberia has now started its work, and we call on all United Nations Members to cooperate fully with the panel and to pass on to it any information that might facilitate its work. The greater the input, the greater the panel's ability to put together an independent and authoritative report.

We note that the President of Liberia has invited the United Nations and ECOWAS to send border monitors to Liberia. We are sceptical that this would be cost-effective; the border is notoriously difficult to seal. We note that, at present in any case, the United Nations expert panel exists with a mandate to look at Liberian compliance with the relevant Security Council resolutions. However, once the panel's mandate has expired we will be ready to look at options for a system of checks on Liberian ports and airfields.

We welcome the accelerating pace of United Nations action on this subregion and the evidence of more effective coordination. This morning's briefings make it clear that there is still a huge amount of work to be done. We have enough analysis, enough missions: let us get on with the action.

Mr. Jerandi (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): I join in thanking Mr. Guéhenno, Mr. Fall and Ms. McAskie for their important briefings.

The situation in West Africa, as described in this morning's briefings and in the excellent report of the Inter-Agency Mission to West Africa (S/2001/434), is most alarming. It threatens to grow beyond control if it is not resolved as a matter of urgency, especially because it could spread, in a domino effect, which would endanger the stability and security of the entire subregion, as the Inter-Agency Mission rightly observed.

The exceptional complexity of this precarious situation in terms of security, humanitarian, economic, social and political matters can no longer be addressed through piecemeal, sectoral or ad hoc responses. We have consistently advocated a comprehensive, integrated, multidimensional approach in order effectively to address the many challenges to peace and security, especially in Africa; we endorse the regional approach advocated by the Inter-Agency Mission and by Ms. McAskie, who enlarged on this idea in her briefing. We note too that Mr. Fall stressed the importance of restoring dialogue among the heads of State of the subregion in order to resolve this situation.

In our view, the Mission's recommendations should be implemented with all due diligence in the framework of coordinated joint action among all those involved. In that connection, we consider that the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), under the leadership of President Konaré — whom we vigorously support in his sustained efforts to resolve the problems facing West Africa — should be fully involved in any activities in the subregion.

That is why my delegation fully supports the recommendations of the Inter-Agency Mission regarding the provision of assistance to ECOWAS to strengthen its institutional, logistical and financial capacities to enable it to shoulder its weighty responsibilities. The United Nations and the Security Council are in fact called upon to support the initiatives of that subregional organization under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, particularly its initiatives to settle these problems by political means and to put an end to the unprecedented humanitarian crisis that the subregion has long been experiencing.

One of the first measures to take in that connection is to help ECOWAS to deploy an interposition force along the borders of Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia in order to ease tension and help the movement or voluntary return of refugees, whose situation remains a matter of concern, in conditions of full safety and security.

The Security Council is actively seized of this matter, and it should focus its efforts on preserving what has been attained in Sierra Leone and on preventing an escalation in the subregion. There are four goals to pursue.

First, the Council should support ECOWAS mediation efforts and encourage the leaders of the three countries to engage in constructive dialogue with a view to resolving pending problems.

Secondly, it should reiterate its appeal to the States concerned to respect one another's territorial integrity, disarm the armed groups that are on their territory, and work to build a climate of trust among themselves.

Thirdly, it should follow closely developments in Liberia, especially the humanitarian crisis that affects hundreds of thousands of Liberian refugees. Here I stress the need for regular assessments of the sanctions and of their effects on the civilian population and on the country's economy. We also consider it necessary to establish an independent verification mechanism to supervise the Liberian Government's compliance with the Council's demands; the Liberian Government itself has proposed the establishment of such a mechanism.

And finally, the Council should help find a solution to the grave humanitarian crisis in the subregion and should support the Mission's recommendation that an international conference be convened to mobilize donor support for these countries, and especially for Guinea.

We hope that the working group set up by the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Inter-Agency Mission's recommendations can report on its work in the near future.

Mr. Ryan (Ireland): We appreciate this important meeting, and we are grateful to Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno, Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator McAskie and Assistant Secretary-General Fall for their valuable briefings.

Assistant Secretary-General Fall's recent Inter-Agency Mission report provides an important framework for addressing the interrelated problems of the West African subregion. It details the need to develop a comprehensive and integrated approach to the priority needs of the subregion and a regional approach to conflict prevention.

At last September's Millennium Summit, our heads of State or Government resolved to achieve a fully coordinated approach to the problems of peace and development. The inter-agency report is a significant attempt by the system to play its part and act on that promise. The report shows that the political and the developmental issues faced by the peoples of West Africa are inextricably linked, and that we cannot tackle successfully one cluster of issues without being coherent in our approach to all.

For the United Nations system it is now very clear that peace-building requires the closest cooperation and coordination between all parts of the United Nations system, at Headquarters, in the region and at country level, in particular the Department of Political Affairs, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the United Nations Development Programme and the resident coordinator system. Other agencies, such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the United Nations Children's Fund and other parts of the United Nations system, can all play crucial roles. The role of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, for example, in relation to poverty reduction strategies and debt alleviation, can also be crucial. All parts of the United Nations system play mutually reinforcing roles at all levels. They can add value to each other's work.

As Member States and members of the Security Council willing to assist, we must, as a minimum, ensure an entry point for the longer-term development perspective, both on the ground at a regional level and at Headquarters. We must ensure that the United Nations has clear lines and definitions of authority, and clear organizational structures to deal at the same time with those parts of the region so tragically in crisis and with the long-term development implications for them and for their neighbours. In the past several years the United Nations has had considerable experience in the areas of crisis management, peace-building and development. We can now draw on that experience, as the inter-agency report attempts to do, and learn the lessons on how to do better in the future. We would hope, for example, if a new United Nations office is to be opened in the region, that any deputy or special representative of the Secretary-General would have significant development experience to match the political skills required.

On a national basis, Ireland has increased significantly our funding to the United Nations funds and programmes because we see their role, and particularly the role of the resident coordinator, as crucial in bringing coherence to the approach of the international community in partnership with the Governments concerned. We have also made multi-annual commitments to the United Nations funds and programmes so that their planning will be based on some predictability of funding. The grant aid nature of United Nations development work, in our view, can be a very significant catalyst in the peace-building/development area. The United Nations inter-agency appeal launched this year by OCHA is an example of an integrated subregional initiative which could assist coordination efforts and help bridge the gap from crisis to development. We in Ireland are currently reviewing our aid programme with a view to seeing what more we can do. We support the recommendation in the report calling on the international financial institutions to review the conditionalities relating to financing arrangements for crisis countries. The impact of HIV/AIDS on the subregion must also be borne in mind.

The inter-agency report also makes a number of recommendations on targeted sanctions as these relate to Liberia. The Security Council recently determined that Liberia had failed to provide satisfactory evidence of a wholehearted, genuine commitment to disengagement from the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and that, therefore, additional sanction measures would come into effect. We would urge the Liberian Government to provide real proof of a change of policy which would enable the Council to review the

sanctions measures and, in the interim, we urge it to afford its full cooperation to the Panel of Experts recently appointed by the Liberia sanctions Committee.

We are most grateful for the briefing given by Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno. There have been encouraging signs that the two-track approach in Sierra Leone — the extension of legitimate political authority and the continuation of dialogue with the RUF to direct the rebels towards a democratic process — is showing some positive results. It is essential that the machinery of civil authority be restored as quickly and effectively as possible in the areas into which the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) has deployed. The Abuja ceasefire review meeting on 2 May produced promising commitments on the part of the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF. The confidence-building measures proposed by the Sierra Leone Government are welcome. I agree with Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno that we are seeing a good first step in the right direction. It is important that these developments be followed through. We are hopeful of further encouraging signs at the meeting scheduled for tomorrow in Freetown.

In this context, I might refer to the inter-agency report recommendation that consideration be given to expanding the mandate of UNAMSIL. We wish to flag that a substantial change to the mandate of a peacekeeping force already in operation presents practical difficulties which we should very carefully bear in mind. However, we would echo very strongly the Mission's recommendation that the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone maintain the two-track approach to the resolution of the Sierra Leone conflict. We, too, are encouraged by the further deployment of UNAMSIL and the pledges of cooperation from the RUF interim leader, Mr. Sesay. But, given the history of the RUF reneging on agreements, we will remain cautious and watchful. We note the extremely positive role that the Economic Community of West African States has been playing in the peace process.

There are also positive indications of an improvement in the level of coordination between the United Nations peacemakers and the development and humanitarian parts of the system. We welcome the opening of the humanitarian office at Kenema. This also is an important step, and we look forward to continued developments in this direction. The appointment of a distinguished Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Sierra Leone, drawn from the development community, would appear to be working well. There are obvious lessons to be learned here. I agree fully with Assistant Secretary-General McAskie, that this work will include close coordination with all players, including non-United Nations players; and I note that OCHA's presence may be reviewed upward.

We welcome very much the briefing given by Assistant Secretary-General McAskie. The conflict in the Mano River Union has created a humanitarian crisis with between 1 million and 1.5 million refugees and internally displaced persons in the region. It is imperative that the Governments in the region be assisted in developing the capacity to absorb returning refugees and internally displaced persons when the security situation permits this. In the interim, it is vital that all parties to the regional conflicts permit complete access by the humanitarian agencies to those in need of assistance, as well as safe passage to those same refugees and internally displaced persons. We acknowledge the heavy burdens imposed on countries in the region in accommodating enormous numbers of refugees, in particular Guinea and its people.

We have noted carefully Assistant Secretary-General McAskie's recommendations, including the strengthening of OCHA's subregional capacity and the important potential represented by women's organizations. Assistant Secretary-General Fall also stressed this point.

The three briefings we have heard today illustrate very clearly the need for and high value of an integrated and holistic approach to the priority issues of West Africa and the interlocking efforts required in the areas of development and crisis management.

Mr. Ahsan (Bangladesh): Thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. We, too, would like to express appreciation for the three briefings today by Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno, Assistant Secretary-General Fall and the Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Ms. McAskie, which complement each other and highlight the essential contours of the problems.

We acknowledge with satisfaction the excellent report on the Inter-Agency Mission led by Mr. Fall. We agree that without an integrated region-wide approach to the problems in the Mano River Union countries, sustainable peace and economic and social

development cannot be achieved. Dialogue is essential to this process. At the same time we think the military pressure, particularly on the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), has to be continued to achieve the ultimate objective of sustainable peace in the region.

On Sierra Leone we note that while endorsing the results of the Abuja ceasefire review Meeting of 2 May, RUF agreed to withdraw all of its combatants from Kambia, release at least 200 child soldiers by 26 May and return all weapons and equipment seized from the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) by 30 May. We have to be watchful that RUF makes good on this promise because their past record is not very straight.

We are concerned that fighting continues in the border areas, destabilizing the entire region. Various armed groups are receiving support and continuing to fight. This has to stop. We are also concerned that reports of ceasefire violations are continuing.

We are satisfied that UNAMSIL continues to be deployed in areas of Sierra Leone that had been dominated by the rebels. We note the enormity of the tasks that the Government of Sierra Leone has ahead of it in that regard. That has been referred to in all three of today's briefings. Clearly, the Government of Sierra Leone needs to be assisted in accomplishing those tasks.

The countries of the Mano River Union also need to remain engaged in order to achieve sustainable peace in the region. All countries in the region should take action to prevent armed individuals and groups from using their territory to prepare and commit attacks on neighbouring countries and refrain from any action that might contribute to further destabilization of the situation on their borders, as the Security Council demanded in resolution 1343 (2001) of 7 March.

We greatly appreciate the role played by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its Chairman, President Konaré of Mali, in promoting peace and stability in the region, as well as the role it played in the recent meeting in Abuja. We support the proposal of ECOWAS to deploy international monitors in the border region and we call on the United Nations and donors to support that initiative by providing ECOWAS with the necessary financial resources and technical assistance.

Despite the recent efforts of the Abuja Summit and the formation of the mediation committee, we regret to note that the leaders of the three countries concerned have so far failed to meet.

During the briefings made today we were also reminded of the importance of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process in sustaining peace and security. We cannot overemphasize the role of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants. Specific actions need to be taken, both by the countries concerned and by donors, to achieve successful DDR. The Sierra Leone Government in particular has to take decisions to ensure the success of the DDR programme and has to be in a position to extend its authority as the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) withdraws from areas it dominates. At the same time, donors must assist the Government in that regard, as that will be critical to the Government's ability to provide former fighters with alternate livelihoods. We particularly emphasize the need to address the issue of reintegrating child combatants with enough care.

We are concerned about the humanitarian situation in the region. We appreciate that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) continues to help trapped refugees, especially those in the "parrot's beak" region of south-east Guinea, by transferring them from insecure border areas to camps in the interior. It is also useful that the capacity of the new sites has regularly increased to keep up with the pace of the relocation exercise. We fully support the two-track approach taken by UNHCR with regard to refugees in Guinea, as Ms. McAskie has mentioned. We recognize that the response to consolidated appeals has to be greatly improved.

We are encouraged by the information regarding the release of children abducted by the RUF. We, too, place great stress on ending the plight of girls who were abducted and whose human rights were violated. We also see hope in the role of the Mano River Union's Women's Peace Network in the Union's countries and we call for assistance for their efforts.

The human rights situation in the region continues to concern us. The recent fighting in the border areas claimed civilian casualties and displaced thousands. All parties must abide by international humanitarian and human rights law and end abuses, including killings and abductions of civilians in areas

affected by fighting. In this situation, we note with satisfaction the opening of the human rights office in Kenema.

Today's briefings have made it clear that enhanced focus on post-conflict reconstruction and economic regeneration is absolutely vital. The United Nations system and the international community should support long-term development in Sierra Leone and assist the Government in gradually expanding its administration and services throughout Sierra Leone and in creating opportunities for former combatants to find alternate sources of livelihood.

Before concluding, we would like to note that given the importance of a subregional approach, we would favour the recommendation to set up a United Nations office in West Africa. We will be open to further discussion of this matter.

Mr. Gatilov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are also grateful to Mr. Guéhenno, Ms. McAskie and Mr. Fall for their comprehensive information on the situation in West Africa.

The Russian Federation is deeply concerned about the difficult situation that has come about in that subregion, and in particular about the explosive situation on Guinea's borders with Liberia and Sierra Leone. We support the efforts undertaken by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to settle this problem on the basis of good-neighbourly relations, a rejection of the use of force and the development of agreed political measures to halt the activities of armed rebel groups on the territory of those States.

A solution to this problem would allow for substantial progress towards eliminating the humanitarian crisis that today threatens the civilian populations of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. That would establish conditions for the safe return of refugees. A personal meeting between the leaders of the countries members of the Mano River Union could be essential for achieving this objective.

In our view, building trust in the subregion could also be furthered by the deployment of a contingent from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to the areas of most intensive activity by the unlawful armed groups. We believe that such an operation should be based on the agreement of all States on whose territories it would be conducted and on the basis of a mandate that includes an enforcement component based on the authorization of the Security Council.

On the whole, the Russian Federation advocates strengthening coordination between United Nations and ECOWAS efforts to settle the situation in West Africa and in averting and preventing conflicts. We are impressed by the proposals in that regard contained in the report of the Inter-Agency Mission to West Africa.

There can be no doubt that the most destabilizing element of the situation in West Africa continues to be the conflict in Sierra Leone. We greatly value the efforts of the leadership and personnel of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) to settle this conflict. We note that there has recently been a tangible turn for the better in this area. In our view, this demonstrates the correctness of the strategy, adopted by the Security Council, to combine strong pressure on the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) with encouragement for the process to find a political settlement of the conflict. Appeals to retreat from such a strategy would only fan the flames of armed conflict in the subregion.

As progress is made towards a settlement and as State administration expands over the territory now in the hands of the rebels, we expect that the Government of Sierra Leone will step up its compliance with the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme for ex-combatants. Those efforts should have the support of UNAMSIL. We agree in principle with arguments put forward in the report of the Inter-Agency Mission calling for a zonal approach to solving problems related to DDR and other aspects of post-conflict peace-building in the Mano River Union region. However, we have some doubts about the appropriateness of expanding UNAMSIL's mandate by extending its activities to the territory of all three States of the Union, primarily because of the differing types of problems that exist in those countries.

We believe that it would be preferable to adopt a policy that would focus on enhancing the coordination of the efforts of the international community, with a key role being played by West African subregional structures.

Of key significance to the settlement of the conflict in Sierra Leone is full compliance by Liberia with the demand of the Security Council that it end its support for the RUF, as set out in Security Council

resolution 1343 (2001). Here I would emphasize that it should end its support, not its contacts, with the Sierra Leonean rebels, within the framework of collective efforts to encourage them to achieve peace. This is the objective of the sanctions with regard to Liberia, and relevant steps taken by its authorities would be duly valued by the Security Council.

We take note of Monrovia's statement on measures adopted in compliance with resolution 1343 (2001) and of its intention to continue to cooperate with the Security Council. We deem valid ECOWAS' recommendation concerning the establishment of a mechanism for monitoring the implementation of sanctions and Liberia's compliance with the demands of the Security Council.

We call upon all States fully to abide by the provisions of resolution 1343 (2001) to prevent armed individuals and groups from using their territory to prepare and commit attacks on neighbouring countries and refrain from any action that might contribute to further destabilization of the situation on the borders between Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to thank the representatives of the Secretariat for their important briefings. I should like also to thank all of the departments and units that contributed to the report that is before us today — that is, the report of the Inter-Agency Mission that visited West Africa last March.

The contents of the report have convinced us that what is needed is a subregional approach by the United Nations system to promote peace and economic development in the countries of West Africa. The report contains a wealth of ideas and proposals which deserve to be fully analysed by the Council. They should also be studied by other agencies of the Organization and by other related institutions.

Today I should like to draw attention to the last paragraph of the report, which discusses follow-up. Perhaps here one could anticipate the work that will be done by the Organization in handling other activities and conflict situations in Africa. It states that following successful implementation of the report, similar approaches should be explored in other parts of Africa. This would certainly be very effective, and, from the budgetary standpoint, it would probably also be much cheaper. It would also be relevant to the advancement of the work of the Security Council itself.

I should like to touch on three points that my delegation considers very important in the promotion of peace and security in the region.

The first point is the role of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). As we said earlier, we cannot conceive of a regional approach to United Nations operations in West Africa that would not include a broad and dynamic interaction with ECOWAS. The Inter-Agency Mission has made several recommendations, mostly geared towards strengthening the institutional capacity of that regional organization in *various areas, inter alia, conflict management*, promotion of development and electoral assistance.

On this point, I should like to ask some questions. I should like to ask the representatives of the Secretariat about the level of cooperation between each of their departments and ECOWAS. Also, how can we make the dialogue between the Council and ECOWAS more productive? Here I would highlight the very important role being played by the Ambassador of Mali.

The second point I would take up is illicit arms trafficking in the region. The arms trade in itself does not in and of itself give rise to conflicts, but broad-ranging circulation of arms destabilizes Governments and aggravates conflict situations. We have noted in particular the presence in West Africa of hired fighters, mercenaries and uncontrolled militias. The countries in the region have committed themselves to a moratorium on the import of small arms and light weapons.

My questions here are as follows. What contribution have the arms-exporting countries made to the moratorium? Does the Secretariat have any information in that respect? Would it help to draw up an international list of arms traders, and would international weapons-control measures not avoid future expenditures on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes?

My last point relates to the humanitarian crisis. There is concern about "donor fatigue" in connection with humanitarian relief in the region. Various figures have been mentioned, and there have been meetings and conferences in various countries calling for greater resources, but it is well known that donor fatigue exists. There is also "asylum fatigue" on the part of countries that take in refugees. Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire are two recent cases of this, despite their long history of taking in refugees. Furthermore, the number

of internally displaced persons continues to increase with every new outbreak of fighting.

Here my questions are: How could a regional strategy help stop these two kinds of fatigue? What is the local capability to provide humanitarian assistance? And, finally, is it viable to think about a rapid-response capability in the region to deal with the humanitarian crisis?

Mr. Doutriaux (France) (*spoke in French*): I wish at the outset to thank you, Mr. President, for your excellent initiative of holding this very comprehensive briefing on the situation in West Africa — a briefing which has brought together the head of Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno; Ms. McAskie, of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; and Mr. Ibrahima Fall of the Department of Political Affairs.

As all of those who spoke before me have noted, the crisis in the subregion has many different aspects — political, peacekeeping and humanitarian — all of which are closely interrelated. As has been mentioned several times, the resumed fighting in Sierra Leone has spilled over to the Guinean border over the last few months, which has given rise to humanitarian problems with respect to the situation of Sierra Leonean refugees, in particular those living in Guinea.

Ms. McAskie also noted the recent case of Liberian citizens who want to settle across the border in Sierra Leone as refugees. Thus the interrelationship between humanitarian, military and political problems continues to aggravate the situation. That is why the suggestions made by Mr. Fall in the wake of his Inter-Agency Mission to the region clearly make sense. Anything that will help us move towards an integrated approach to the problems must be considered.

For example, Mr. Fall's proposal to open a subregional office with a special representative in the region is sound one, as is the idea of creating an inter-agency working group in New York. In the same vein, we must clearly strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). We are grateful for the initiatives taken by ECOWAS in this regard that have made it possible to relaunch the peace process in Sierra Leone; I will come back to that point later. We also welcome the efforts of ECOWAS to bring together the three heads of State of the Mano River Union countries.

In this regard, I would like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to the fact that the European Union will itself be sending a mission to the region, headed by the former Ambassador of Sweden to the United Nations, Ambassador Dahlgren, who is now Sweden's Secretary of State. He will lead the mission on behalf of the presidency of the European Union. The mission will meet with all the heads of State in the region, as well as with President Konaré in his capacity as the current Chairman of ECOWAS. The European Union thus supports the peace initiatives in the region.

I should also like to mention two other countries referred to by Mr. Fall: Guinea-Bissau and Côte d'Ivoire. We fully support Mr. Fall's proposals in this regard. In Côte d'Ivoire, for example, we should promote dialogue for reconciliation. The European Union has entered into a dialogue with the Ivorian authorities in that regard.

We were very interested in what Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno said with regard to the most recent positive developments in Sierra Leone. Again, thanks to ECOWAS initiatives, the Abuja meeting and the activities of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), there are some positive signals relating to the strengthening of dialogue between UNAMSIL, the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). This is very positive, but, as Ambassador Greenstock said, we must now move on to the implementation of the commitments that have been renewed, and we will follow developments very closely.

One of the commitments undertaken by the RUF and mentioned by Mr. Guéhenno is of great interest in the matter of the return of Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea. During the Abuja meeting and the Makeni follow-up meeting, the possibility of the deployment of UNAMSIL and the Sierra Leone army in the Kambia district was raised. Mr. Guéhenno referred to the date of, I believe, 18 May, which is in a few day's time. I should therefore like to ask Mr. Guéhenno how UNAMSIL plans to respond to the RUF withdrawal from Kambia. Is UNAMSIL going to be deployed in that district to facilitate the voluntary return of Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea who want to use the Conakry-Freetown route that passes through the district of Kambia?

My last point relates to what Ms. McAskie said about the situation of refugees and displaced persons,

in particular the serious situation that is continuing in Guinea, where, as Ms. McAskie said, Ms. Short and Mr. Josselin recently made a joint visit. It is clear that international assistance must be provided to Guinea, as Mr. Fall recommended in the report issued following his Inter-Agency Mission. However, in addition to humanitarian relief, there is the question of the return of refugees. That return must, of course, be voluntary. The return must take place, and the refugees must be taken in, under the best possible conditions.

In this regard, we have received fairly worrying information relating to what has happened in Gueckedou. Ms. McAskie spoke about the different possibilities, in particular the relocation of some refugee camps in that area further to the north. We have received rather disturbing information about the conditions attached to that relocation. Is it true that the refugees have been asked to go by foot, more than 150 kilometres under difficult conditions? Is it also true that to encourage the refugees to move north, they have been given to understand that those who stay will no longer receive humanitarian assistance?

My first question thus relates to refugees in Gueckedou. I have another question, about the refugees who want to return but from the west of Guinea to Sierra Leone. I have been told that, until very recently, there were two boats chartered by the International Organization for Migration that enabled Sierra Leonean refugees who wanted to go back home to do so through the maritime route from Conakry to Freetown. I understand that there is now only one boat. I would like to know why the means of transportation have been reduced for refugees who want to return to Sierra Leone voluntarily.

I have one last question. Resolution 1346 (2001), which we adopted several weeks ago, contains one paragraph — I believe it is paragraph 9 — that requests the Secretary-General to submit to the Council a report dealing in particular with the question of the support that UNAMSIL can provide for the voluntary return of Sierra Leonean refugees currently in Guinea. We would like to know when the Council will be receiving that report.

The President: Before giving the floor to the next speaker, I would like to note that there are still seven speakers on my list, and I am sure that we would like to give our guests at least a brief opportunity to respond to some of the comments and questions that have been posed.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): I should like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this open briefing on the situation in West Africa. Last year's Security Council mission concluded that the highest priority must be given to the coordination of a comprehensive strategy, with clear objectives to address the regional dimensions of the conflict in Sierra Leone. My delegation therefore welcomes the comprehensive report of the Inter-Agency Mission to West Africa, contained in document S/2001/434, and the thought-provoking analysis and recommendations contained therein. This report has been very ably complemented by the presentations made today by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, the Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator and the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, who led the Inter-Agency Mission.

The report and today's briefings clearly emphasize the need for an integrated, holistic strategy involving the Governments and people of the States concerned, the United Nations system and the regional and subregional organizations if we are to achieve a sustained and lasting solution to the problems in the region. We agree with the Secretary-General that an integrated, subregional approach by the international community is urgently needed to help prevent the further emergence of conflicts, restore peace and security and promote economic and social development. It is in this context that my delegation continues to support the holding of a meeting between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. Such a meeting, which we hope will take place in the near future, could usefully focus on the situation in West Africa. Today's meeting is nevertheless timely, as the Security Council considers what action it can take with respect to its own responsibilities for international peace and security.

I now wish to comment on some of the aspects of the Inter-Agency Mission's report, as well as on the briefing we have received. First of all, I wish to welcome the report by Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno on the meeting held in Abuja on 10 May between the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the United Nations, the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), aimed at reviewing the implementation of the Abuja ceasefire Agreement. We

sincerely hope that the commitments made by the RUF will be carried out.

Regarding the further forward deployment of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) into RUF-controlled areas, we have heard from Mr. Fall about criticisms of the United Nations operations and we must again emphasize the importance of the public information activities of UNAMSIL aimed at sensitizing the population about the Mission's mandate. At the same time, the proposal for the expansion of UNAMSIL's mandate into the neighbouring countries deserves our serious consideration.

Second, Jamaica fully supports the recommendation for the establishment of a mechanism for systematic and regular consultations among entities of the United Nations system for defining and harmonizing national and subregional policies. Frequent consultation with ECOWAS and other subregional agencies would be critical to developing cohesive strategies. As was clearly highlighted in the meeting between the ECOWAS ministers and the Security Council in February, there needs to be close collaboration between the Council and ECOWAS in seeking to bring about a resolution of the conflict affecting the West African region.

Third, the establishment of a United Nations political office for West Africa would, in my delegation's view, be a step in the right direction. Such an office could send a positive signal to the West African region that the United Nations is serious about enhancing its capacity and collaboration in the subregion. Such an office must, we believe, be fully staffed to tackle the wide cross-section of issues. This should be done on a regional basis and collocated in Abuja in order to strengthen its linkages with ECOWAS. We also support, as an interim measure, the establishment of an integrated mission task force, which would be a useful mechanism for continuity.

Fourth, my delegation has consistently expressed concern at the escalating conflict in the region. We agree that dialogue among the leaders of the region to devise ways and means to resolve the crisis is of paramount importance, because peace agreements can have little effect if there is no political will to effect a sustained and lasting peace. We would encourage the mediation efforts of the heads of State of Mali, Togo and Nigeria, recently appointed by the ECOWAS summit, and we hope that this meeting will take place soon.

The situation in Sierra Leone and its effects on Liberia and Guinea involving the border areas have escalated into a humanitarian crisis involving thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons. Jamaica supports in principle the establishment of an interposition force along the shared borders of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea.

We have heard from Ms. McAskie, as well as from Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno and Assistant Secretary-General Fall, how this crisis has spread across borders. We welcome the initiatives taken by ECOWAS at its meetings last December and in April to address the mounting concerns and we have noted the concrete steps being proposed by ECOWAS. We recognize only too well the dire need for international assistance in terms of equipment and logistics in order to mount a successful operation.

Fifth, Jamaica fully subscribes to the importance of approaching conflict prevention and resolution from a regional, rather than a national perspective. It is disheartening, however, to see that there continues to be a reluctance to devote resources to conflict-prevention and peace-building measures, even though we are prepared to meet the huge costs involved in dealing with situations after conflicts have erupted. It is therefore important that our conflict-prevention strategies should aim at strengthening ECOWAS's capacity for conflict prevention, management and resolution and for ensuring security. The need for the development of ECOWAS's early warning capacity is also of importance.

The report of the Inter-Agency Mission mentions that

> "Cooperation between intergovernmental organizations within the subregion with civil society organizations in the areas of conflict prevention and management remains limited and could be strengthened considerably." (*S/2001/434, para. 33*)

It is our belief that civil society plays a pivotal role in conflict prevention and that it should be encouraged. We therefore welcome the initiatives undertaken by ECOWAS in the Mano River basin aimed at developing support for civil society.

Sixth, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants are essential components of the post-conflict peace-building process. It is regrettable that, to date, such a programme in the region has been thwarted, owing primarily to the lack of funding. We are aware that conflicts in the region are often fuelled by economic reasons; war is a lucrative business and, therefore, any incentive to curb the crisis must involve alternative sources of gainful employment. We are particularly concerned about the situation of ex-combatants, child soldiers and girls, of which Ms. McAskie made mention. Adequate and sustained funding should be provided for job training and job creation and for the counselling, rehabilitation and resettlement of all ex-combatants. In this regard, I wish to draw attention to the fact that, in these programmes, we have very often ignored the fact that women are often ex-combatants as well as men. We need to address the specific needs and problems which these women face in the integration process and to determine what steps can be taken to address their psychological as well as their domestic needs.

Seventh, the proliferation of arms in the subregion continues to be of great concern to my delegation. While we fully support the recommendations outlined in the relevant section of the report, aimed, *inter alia*, at strengthening ECOWAS's capacity to monitor and curb the illegal flow of arms, we feel it to be equally important that efforts be undertaken by arms manufacturers to cease the export of small arms to conflict areas.

As I mentioned earlier, women have become increasingly effective participants at the peace table and they have continued to assist in creating an enabling environment for conflict prevention, peacemaking and post-conflict peace-building. We therefore welcome the Mano River Union Women's Peace Network, which links women from Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, and we support the request made by Assistant Secretary-General Fall and Ms. McAskie for assistance to be given to that programme.

Last, the flow of refugees across the borders of the three countries has fuelled what can be described as one of the most serious refugee situations in the world. We believe that any solution to this crisis must also involve a regional strategy entailing specific criteria for action. We therefore fully support the two-track approach by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, as well as the proposed presence of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the United Nations office for West Africa.

We recognize, however — as Ms. McAskie pointed out — that conditions for the full return of refugees to Sierra Leone or Liberia do not at present exist and we are disturbed at Ms. McAskie's reports of harassment and thefts experienced by refugees and internally displaced persons. It therefore must be impressed upon all armed groups that they must provide safe access and safe passage to refugees, internally displaced persons and humanitarian personnel operating in the areas of conflict.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to commend the Secretary-General and the agencies concerned for the initiatives taken to address the situation in the subregion in an integrated manner. We wish to assure the Secretary-General, the men and women of UNAMSIL and the people of the region of Jamaica's continued solidarity and support.

Mr. Mahbubani (Singapore): I, too, would like to begin by thanking Mr. Guéhenno, Ms. McAskie and Mr. Fall for their presentations. I would also like especially to thank Mr. Fall for the excellent report that he has submitted to us.

There is one main point that I would like to emphasize in my remarks today: that the Council has got to ensure that, whatever it does, it does in cooperation with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The main contribution of Mr. Fall's report is that it spells out in great detail the concerns of the region — the concerns I heard when I was there personally — and I hope that the Council will pay attention to the concerns expressed in the report.

At the same time, looking at West Africa, we see a paradoxical situation. The paradox is this: it is a region blessed with excellent reports. Indeed, if you look at the Security Council mission report of last October, Mr. Fall's report and Ms. McAskie's report, you will see that they are excellent reports. But if you look at the contents of the reports, you find lots of bad news. For example, since no one has referred to this, I would like quickly to quote from paragraph 13 of the report:

> "Throughout the Mission's visit the gravity of the political and security situation in the West African subregion and the potential for the rapid spread of insecurity and instability, unless urgent steps are taken to address the causes of conflict and turmoil in several countries, were repeatedly underscored. ... The possibility of a 'domino effect', with instability spreading rapidly from one country to another within the subregion is a source of deep and widespread concern." (*S/2001/434*)

So the question is, how do we deal with this paradox? How do we ensure that the next time we meet we will not just get good reports; that we will get good news from the region? I guess the underlying purpose of my comments today is to help resolve that question.

I would like to make four points. The first point is that, while I think we have received very useful briefings, I wonder whether in those briefings we can balance the details that we receive with more assessment. Having listened to all the briefings today, I find myself — even though I have just visited the region — lost in a forest of details. Can we take a helicopter view of the whole situation to see where we are vis-à-vis where we were in the past? For example, it is useful to remind ourselves that it was just a year ago that soldiers of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) were taken hostage by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). We have clearly come a long way since then. If you look at the military situation within Sierra Leone, it looks promising. But the military situation around Sierra Leone has got a lot worse. Are there connections between the two? What is going on here?

I hope that when we review the situation we will not take just a snapshot view of each situation, but will try to look at the overall trends and see how they are going. For example, if you look at the peace process, again, the peace process within Sierra Leone seems to have improved; there seem to be, as we have heard today, discussions involving UNAMSIL, the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF. But the peace process involving the three countries of the Mano River Union seems to have deteriorated and, as several speakers have noted, talks are not taking place among the three leaders. So how do we piece together the picture?

My second point is on our working methods. Both last month and this month we have tried to improve our working methods to see how we can ensure that as we meet and discuss a problem we add value to it. Perhaps, to add value each time we discuss West Africa, we should begin by asking ourselves: What have we done in the past? What decisions have we made? Which have been implemented and which not? And in the case of those that have not been implemented, why not? In that regard, Mr. Fall's report has brought out many specific criticisms of the United Nations. Indeed, if you read paragraph 112 you will notice that several interlocutors were critical of a number of United Nations policies. The question is: How do we react to those criticisms? And, if we think they are not fair or balanced, how do we respond to them?

At the same time, Mr. Fall's report has also made some specific recommendations we have to deal with. For example, several countries in the region said that the UNAMSIL mandate should be expanded. We have heard remarks here, some in support, some not in support of the expansion of the UNAMSIL mandate. What will our decision be? How do we respond to that request from the region? Here, I hope that we will reflect on these questions that have been brought before us.

My third point is about long-term indicators. One of the most vivid impressions I brought back from my visit to the region was that clearly there are also long-term problems developing in the region. Any good social scientist, looking at the demographics of the region, looking at the number of children being born and the number of children in school, can make projections and can tell that there are problems that will be coming to us five, 10, 15 years down the road. It is useful for us to balance our short-term work with questions related to long-term projections, and to ask ourselves whether the long-term trends are positive or negative. If they are negative, do we have an obligation not just to address the present snapshot situation of the day, but to ask what we can do to make sure that the same problems will not come back to haunt the Council five years or 10 years down the road?

My fourth and final point relates to the question of financing. Clearly, West Africa is a region of high priority for us, and I think that high priority is reflected in the amount of resources and attention we are devoting to it. Clearly, the very discussion we are

having today and the fact that an inter-agency task force was set up show that the Council is deeply concerned about the region. But the concern is best demonstrated by the amount of money we are spending on the region. Here, it might be useful for us to be provided with some statistics so that we can see how we are allocating the funds for the region. For example, I am told that, as a rough estimate, we will be spending $800 million this year on the peacekeeping operations. Possibly, we may be spending up to $100 million over the next three years on the special court in Sierra Leone. How do those figures compare with the amount of money we are spending on the humanitarian side and with the amount of money we are spending on the development side? Is the balance right? If you want to try to find the right long-term solutions for the region, you ought to ensure that, as you allocate resources, you allocate them rationally, on the basis of need and not on the basis of any arbitrary decision.

I hope that the very valuable reports and the very valuable briefings we have had will not be lost and that, when we meet next time, we will come back and try to address some of these questions.

Mr. Wang Donghua (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, we thank Mr. Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Ms. McAskie, Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, and Mr. Fall, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, for their briefings, all three of which were very important for the next stage in our effort to find solutions to the problems of West Africa.

The international community, including the United Nations, has made tremendous, successful endeavours to bring peace and stability to West Africa. We are most grateful to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for its efforts. The March visit by the Inter-Agency Mission to West Africa marked yet another United Nations effort to find solutions to the problems of the subregion. The report of that Mission (S/2001/434) sets out many excellent and practicable recommendations that merit serious study and adoption by the Council. This should be followed up with concrete action.

Now the Council should focus on the security situation in the border area of Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia and should promptly carry out a study on ways and means to support the deployment of ECOWAS forces along the borders of the three countries and effectively to verify Liberia's compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions so that those resolutions can be genuinely implemented.

The report's recommendation to establish a United Nations office for West Africa is a very good one. Such an office should coordinate the work of the relevant United Nations agencies, of the United Nations itself and of other agencies, along with coordinating cooperation between the United Nations and ECOWAS, to ensure that all action is fully coordinated. The head of that office, in order to deal with day-to-day responsibilities, should more importantly focus on comprehensively resolving long-term problems in this area.

We also support strengthening the presence of the humanitarian relief agencies in this area, because the humanitarian problems are integrally linked with the security situation in the area. Therefore, while resolving security problems, we should also strengthen our efforts to solve humanitarian problems.

Mr. Krokhmal (Ukraine): I would like to join the other delegations in thanking Mr. Guéhenno, Ms. McAskie and Mr. Fall for their valuable briefings, which cover various aspects of the situation in the region and give us a comprehensive analysis of the crisis in West Africa.

We have given careful consideration to the report of the Inter-Agency Mission to West Africa and the recommendations contained therein, which, in our view, represent a constructive plan of action for the United Nations system towards developing a comprehensive approach to durable and sustainable solutions for priority needs and challenges of the region.

The recent Inter-Agency Mission to West Africa clearly demonstrated that the multidimensional nature of the crisis in the region demands effective coordination and partnership among the United Nations family, the regional organizations and the other relevant stakeholders. We therefore welcome the submission of the report of the Mission to the Economic and Social Council and its communication to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the World Bank, the European Union and other major multilateral and bilateral partners.

My delegation took careful note of the recommendations of the Mission, in particular those falling within the primary competence of the Security Council concerning peace and security in West Africa. I would like to make a few comments on the specific issues within this area.

We agree with the conclusion that resolution of the conflicts in the Mano River Union area is crucial in any approach aimed at addressing priority needs and challenges in the subregion.

Members may recall that upon return from its visit to West Africa, the Security Council Mission made it very clear there is an urgent need to develop a comprehensive, coordinated strategy for Sierra Leone. This report reaffirms the importance of a two-track approach to the resolution of the Sierra Leone conflict, promoting both military deterrence and political dialogue between the parties to the Abuja Agreement. My country, as it participates in the United Nations peacekeeping operation in Sierra Leone, will continue to support this strategy.

We believe that some specific recommendations concerning the resolution of the conflict along the borders of the Mano River Union countries and the expanded role of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) should be further studied by the appropriate departments of the Secretariat. Such an analysis would be particularly useful for the Security Council to act in the most effective way.

We maintain that, in light of the nature of the deteriorating political, security and humanitarian crisis in the region, it is imperative that a solution to the situation in the subregion should be sought by the three leaders of the Mano River Union countries without further delay.

The report raises a number of issues concerning conflict prevention, peacekeeping, peace-building, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and implementation of sanctions, which together with the problems of governance and human rights, humanitarian assistance for the refugees, as well as economic development and regional integration, will constitute important elements of a subregional approach to the problems faced by West Africa.

We are of the view that, in line with the efforts to develop a comprehensive subregional strategy, there should be in place an effective coordination mechanism in the region to implement it. We support the idea of establishing a United Nations office for West Africa as a welcome step towards intensifying collaboration of the United Nations system activities with those of ECOWAS and other subregional and relevant organizations. We entirely agree with the analysis of the Mission that a prime factor in addressing priority needs and challenges of West Africa is effective subregional integration in the political, security, economic and social spheres where ECOWAS has a central role to play.

It is also important for the international community to support and assist ECOWAS activities and initiatives, in particular those related to capacity-building measures for the ECOWAS secretariat, and for promoting mechanisms of early warning and conflict-prevention, as well as law, judiciary and human rights issues and regional economic integration.

In conclusion, we hope that today's very broad discussion with the family of United Nations organs and agencies, relevant institutions and Member States will be a step forward to the successful implementation of a fully integrated and broad-based subregional approach aimed at addressing the multifaceted problems confronting the region and promoting durable peace and sustainable development in West Africa.

The President: I want to note that we are now at 1 o'clock, and I intend to continue this meeting without a break. I ask that the remaining speakers be brief so that we can give time to the Secretariat. I commit myself to greatly shortening the statement that I was going to make at the end of this meeting in my national capacity.

Mr. Neewoor (Mauritius): In response to your appeal, Mr. President, I will try to shorten my statement and will limit myself to making some observations relating to the inter-agency report.

First, I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Assistant Secretary-General Ibrahima Fall, and the Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Ms. Carolyn McAskie, for their important briefings this morning. With regard to the report of the Inter-Agency Mission to West Africa, I wish to highly commend Mr. Fall and members of the inter-agency team for the comprehensive and far-reaching report. We appreciate in particular the depth and analytical quality of the report. We fully endorse all of its recommendations.

The report confirms beyond any doubt that the conflicts in West Africa must be addressed in an integrated and regional perspective. We believe that is also true of the Great Lakes region, and that we will in due course have to look at possibilities there as well. The priority now should be to develop the necessary strategies to implement the recommendations of the inter-agency report in a time-bound manner. I would like to ask Mr. Ibrahima Fall whether reflection is already taking place in the Secretariat on an implementation plan for the this important report.

Mauritius has always advocated in the Council the need to involve regional and subregional organizations in peacekeeping and peace-building efforts. We commend the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for its vision for the maintenance of peace and security in West Africa and for the promotion of economic and social development in the subregion. ECOWAS must be fully supported by the United Nations system and the international community in that endeavour.

Finally, I would like to mention that we are disappointed that the tribunal for Sierra Leone has not yet been established. We appeal to the donor community to come forward once again and support the establishment of the tribunal for Sierra Leone.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): I shall also shorten my statement.

Like others, we believe that it is not possible to look at developments in one country without taking the situation in the entire region into consideration. Norway encourages close cooperation within the United Nations system and close contacts between the United Nations and regional organizations. The role of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is of particular importance. Norway encourages efforts to strengthen that organization.

Adequate funding is needed for the United Nations to fulfil its obligations in the region. It is therefore with great concern that we note that the appeals for Sierra Leone and West Africa have not received the needed donor support. Norway, for its part, will continue to provide humanitarian support for the international humanitarian efforts in the region. We strongly encourage all Member States to increase their contributions.

Easy access to small arms fuels conflicts throughout the West African region. Preventing the proliferation of small arms is therefore a paramount issue in conflict prevention. Several countries in the region, Mali being one of them, have shown a strong commitment to that important issue. An important factor in reducing the number of small arms is the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants. We believe that an effective DDR programme is a precondition for the successful completion of the United Nations peace operation in Sierra Leone. However, in Sierra Leone that process is not progressing as expected. We would therefore appreciate more information. If indeed needed, Norway is prepared to consider providing additional support to the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), particularly in the field of DDR.

New developments after the Abuja ceasefire review meeting give us hope that the DDR process will now be revitalized. The implementation of an agreement in this field and the possible deployment of the Sierra Leone Army in the Kambia district will be of significant importance for the many internally displaced persons and returnees in the country. If a substantial repatriation and resettlement operation is started, it will be crucial that steps be taken by local Governments, in cooperation with UNAMSIL, to ensure the security of the returning populations and of the personnel of the humanitarian agencies. We also believe that it is of the utmost importance that Sierra Leonean refugees who originate from areas that are declared secure get assistance to leave their internally displaced persons camps and reintegrate into their home regions as soon as possible. However, the demobilization process is moving at a slow pace. The unwillingness of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) to let the Government of Sierra Leone rebuild institutions in the new areas of UNAMSIL deployment is a matter of concern, as it is seriously undermining reconstruction and reconciliation efforts.

Developments in the region continue to give us reason for concern. The Security Council and the United Nations as a whole must therefore continue to follow the situation in West Africa closely. We believe that the new sanctions imposed by resolution 1343 (2001) are the result of the emphasis the Council puts on the need to have a comprehensive approach to developments in West Africa. Political stability and development in the countries of the region can come

only as a result of the collective efforts of local political leaders and the international community to build peace and to commit the needed resources to secure economic development for the long-suffering people in that part of the world.

The President: I would now like to make a brief statement in my national capacity.

I will not review all the elements that have been discussed. I think we have a pretty clear idea of the kinds of things that need to be done in West Africa. But I did want to note that we are not talking about a natural disaster here; we are talking about a man-made disaster that was created by the people of the region by and large, many of whom are still there. It cannot be solved outside the region. We need to find a way to support those in Sierra Leone and in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) who are looking for a solution.

The United States is committed to that. We have devoted significant resources to this effort and we will continue to do so. We want to see results on the ground — practical, concrete results — in the areas of humanitarian assistance and human rights. That includes providing the safety required for refugees to return, which has been promised for so long, as well as results in the area of security and in the political field — first and foremost in security, because that is the precondition to moving forward.

We were glad to hear what Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno had to say about the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). UNAMSIL needs to be credible. It is an instrument of the resolve of the international community and the belief that the crisis in Sierra Leone pits an elected Government against a violent insurgency. The goal is, and has to remain, the extension of the authority of that Government.

We found the Fall report very thought-provoking. It addresses many of the concerns that also came up in the Security Council mission report, now more than six months ago. I think we all agree on the need for coordination and integration. That approach is clear, but it is not clear that the right arrangements are in place, or coming into place, even after those six to eight months. We look forward to progress in that area.

We also strongly support the efforts made in the field by ECOWAS to deal with the problems that we have discussed today. Its role is essential.

With regard to the idea of extending UNAMSIL's mandate throughout the region, like the United Kingdom and some others we are doubtful that that is the right way to go. In our view, what we really need at this point is a stronger political process and political effort in the region, as foreseen by ECOWAS and in the tasking of its mediation committee. We hope for results from that effort.

Looking to the future, the United States will not treat victim and aggressor in the same fashion. We will not support a party's abdicating a peace agreement while demanding its protections and privileges. We oppose treating President Taylor of Liberia, who is responsible for the founding and maintenance of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), as both arsonist and firefighter in Sierra Leone. We take note of the sanctions that have come into effect. Like others, we hope for their early implementation, and we hope for early and convincing actions by the Government of Liberia to stop destabilizing its nature and persecuting its own people.

The President: I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I shall give the floor to our guests to respond to the questions asked and the comments made. Again, unfortunately, I must remind our guests of the hour.

I call on Mr. Guéhenno.

Mr. Guéhenno: First, I will address the questions put by the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom. He asked a factual question on clashes in the east. There have been three series of clashes. The first took place on 19 April in the Tongo area. The Civil Defence Forces (CDF) allegedly attacked Revolutionary United Front (RUF) positions in response to what was perceived as a RUF build-up in the area. The RUF retaliated and dislodged the CDF, which is now based in Lago.

The second series of clashes occurred in Talia, 9 kilometres east of Mano Junction, on 6 May. It was also a CDF operation.

The third ceasefire violation is being investigated by the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), further north in the Kono district.

According to press reports quoting the chief of staff of the Sierra Leone Army, operations were carried out by the Donsos — people from Guinea — against the RUF to open up the corridor to return to Guinea. Presently UNAMSIL is investigating those reports and this particular ceasefire violation.

With respect to the elections, are we on the right track? As I said in my briefing, what we have seen is indeed a first step, as is the positive atmosphere at the Abuja review meeting. It needs to be followed, as Sir Jeremy said, by very concrete action on the ground, namely ensuring freedom of movement throughout the country; the surrender of weapons; and active progress — real, substantive progress — in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. I will come back to that in reply to the question posed by the Permanent Representative of Norway. Failing that, all we will have is fine words. If concrete progress follows on the ground, then we will be in a position to exploit the next window of opportunity, which will be the next dry season — that is, between October and May. If at that time there is full deployment of UNAMSIL, if the authority of the Government of Sierra Leone has been established throughout the country, if there is full disarmament of the RUF as well as of the CDF, and if the electoral preparations have been completed, then I think we should, and could, have the elections as anticipated.

The second series of questions was put by the Permanent Representative of Colombia, and I will answer those that were specifically addressed to me, on coordination with ECOWAS. That coordination happens at two levels: at the level of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Adeniji. There are actually frequent consultations at the top political level. There is also participation by ECOWAS in the coordination mechanism that has been established between the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone, and ECOWAS has a representative in Freetown.

There is also coordination with ECOWAS in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations here in New York. We have sent teams to assist ECOWAS with technical advice at various meetings to prepare for deployment.

Making a broader political point, I want to stress the importance we attach to cooperation with ECOWAS, and I take this opportunity to express the appreciation of the Secretariat for the efforts of ECOWAS in securing greater cooperation between the key players in this conflict. Without cooperation between those key players, it would indeed be quite difficult to implement a regional strategy. The relative success of UNAMSIL in Sierra Leone has been based on the very close coordination in Sierra Leone and on the possibility of implementing the Ceasefire Agreement, as agreed on 10 November last. Lacking such a basis, it is indeed very difficult to foresee any real progress at the regional level.

(*spoke in French*)

The representative of France asked questions on the practical measures that UNAMSIL could take to ensure the return of the refugees to the Kambia zone after the disarmament of the RUF in that zone. I can say that UNAMSIL will first of all carefully monitor the withdrawal of the RUF and the deployment of the Sierra Leone Army. It will step up patrolling in that zone, eventually using a set point of departure, which could be established in Kambia itself.

Ensuring the security of refugees is the responsibility of the Sierra Leone Army, but UNAMSIL will monitor developments, and the humanitarian community will, of course, see to the hosting of those refugees. Let me also add in that respect that we can expect that a significant number of the returning internally displaced persons — about 13,000 — will be coming from Lungi, since a number of people from Sierra Leone had left the Kambia zone for the Lungi zone, which is near the capital, Freetown.

The last question was posed by the Ambassador of Norway on the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme.

(*spoke in English*)

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration does continue, but, unfortunately, at the moment it is down to a trickle, and the issue is really to move in a higher gear to make it substantive, so that the ceasefire, as agreed, is fully implemented. Both UNAMSIL and the Government of Sierra Leone are ready to do more in the next phase of organized disarmament. Some funds are available, but more will be needed in future if the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process is to be more than bringing people to account and actually reintegrating them into society, which is the real, long-term fundamental issue if we want to

have success in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

The World Bank in that respect is likely to convene a donors' conference in the near future. UNAMSIL has the leading role on the ground through the role of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Doss.

The President: I call on Ms. McAskie.

Ms. McAskie: Let me thank the representatives of Mali and Jamaica and the other speakers who have given their support for the strengthening of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). I can assure the Council that these words are actually extremely useful to us, and that OCHA, although it is mostly voluntarily funded, is a Secretariat department and must abide by Secretariat rules and regulations and go through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), the Fifth Committee and so on to establish posts in the field. So concrete measures of support from the Council on our operations are extremely useful to us in speeding up these processes.

The United Kingdom asked specific questions about the appointment of a humanitarian coordination and the timing of the establishment of a subregional office. On the latter, we are working now to establish a small unit in Abijan that would work on early warning and contingency planning but would also provide a base to an OCHA person, whom we would base in one of the three Mano River Union countries to provide the information and strategic analysis functions and a link to the United Nations Office for West Africa. We are working on that now. The appointment of the humanitarian coordinator is under discussion with the concerned agencies, and we would hope to make it quickly; I cannot give a specific date.

The United Kingdom also asked a question about the movement of refugees out of the Languette. With 40,000 already moved out, we are anticipating that another 30,000 will move in the next two weeks. I will come back to that in response to the questions from the representative of France.

In response to Colombia's question about the relationship of the United Nations Secretariat with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), speaking very specifically for OCHA, although we do not have direct cooperation with ECOWAS on humanitarian delivery, obviously — that is not their role — we are working very closely with them on early warning and, in fact, are assisting them in strengthening early-warning mechanisms.

The representative of France asked some very specific questions about refugee return movement. I can assure him that I think we all agree that this is a major concern. We all agree on the basic principle of voluntary return and on the need for security in the country of asylum, which has often been linked to the question of proximity to borders. As Council members know, there is a paragraph in the Organization of African Unity Convention that refers to an estimated distance from borders, recommended at 50 kilometres. The situation that arose in the Languette proves the usefulness of that particular guidance, and as such the movement of refugees to areas away from the border has been ongoing now since 3 May. It is true that original plans included the possibility of only the able-bodied walking, with the others being trucked. But in fact arrangements have been made to truck everyone out, so people are being driven to the new camps. That is why the exercise is taking slightly longer; it actually would have been faster if they had moved on foot. A major obstacle has been finding the trucks. As to whether this means that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) would no longer provide assistance to refugees in the Languette, the answer is, yes, it would not. When we have a major policy with the Government of Guinea and the international community to move them away, an offer of assistance to refugees in the Languette would mean the failure of the project. We cannot offer assistance to the same people in two spots; it is not consistent. That does not mean that those in need of humanitarian assistance within those areas will not be getting some assistance. A number of major non-governmental organizations, supported by the United Nations, will continue to operate in the area — Médecins sans Frontières, Action contre la Faim and Caritas — for example, will continue to offer assistance with our support.

On the question of the slowing down of the boat traffic — yes; there are very few candidates, actually, for return by boat. It is not a deliberate policy of UNHCR or the International Organization for Migration to stop the boat traffic. The population of Forecariah has diminished, but in addition the Guinean Government is trying to encourage refugees to stay

away from Conakry because of the overcrowding there. I believe my colleague covered the point on the Kambia crossing. There is no doubt that the opening of the Forecariah-Kambia route in the future will offer a significant opportunity for the safer and more comfortable return of refugees. Finally, the report being prepared by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, with support from OCHA, in accordance with paragraph 9 of resolution 1346 (2001), should be ready in a few days.

The last question of which I took note was the question from Singapore about juxtaposing the expenditure of UNAMSIL and the tribunal and spending on development and humanitarian aid. Obviously, I do not have a figure for the totality of development and humanitarian aid for the region, because much of it comes from non-United Nations sources. Suffice it to say that for this year, if we add up the funds that we have collected from the appeal for Sierra Leone and the appeal for the region, it totals about $25 million, and we are already well into the month of May. So we will be actively seeking additional support.

Finally, I was very pleased to hear the support for the regional approach. I think we are all aligned on that. But that should not blind us to the fact that solutions must also play out at the country level. In Sierra Leone, the end of war is only the beginning. I think that we have in Sierra Leone a classic example of where the international community, the international institutions and the United Nations need to work together to avoid any question of a humanitarian gap. As I said, this is a classic test case for the international community.

The lesson we have learned in Guinea is that the international community has tools at its disposal to assist refugees and countries in crisis, but not to assist host countries of refugees. Guinea has suffered from this for a long time, and now that it has a humanitarian crisis of its own, we have to look at the link between massive underdevelopment and regional instability.

Finally, on Liberia, the third of the three countries, the deteriorating humanitarian situation is only the tip of the iceberg. Given its long isolation, there is very little capacity in Government, civil society or the international agencies present on the ground. When conditions permit — and I realize that some of those conditions are quite strict — there will be a need for a long-term and in-depth approach to Liberia.

If you, Mr. President, will permit me to do so, I should like to end on a lighter note in our discussion of a serious subject. You referred to the fact that this was a man-made disaster, not a natural disaster. I can assure you that that is one expression on which we are not seeking gender equity.

The President: I will remember that next time.

I give the floor to Mr. Fall.

Mr. Fall: First of all, I would like to express my full agreement with Ms. McAskie's comments that the regional approach should not be a substitute for the national approach. Rather, it should be a complementary way to strengthen the national approach.

Turning to the questions, I will be very brief. As far as the issue of proposing the geographical extension of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone is concerned, the issue before the Mission was not actually its composition. Its composition reflected all the departments concerned, including the Department of Peacekeeping Operations — the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General was a member of the Mission. Rather, the issue was about giving fair treatment to concerns expressed in the region by the leaders. It is just for that reason that we thought it would be fair to express those concerns.

Secondly, how do we improve the dialogue between the United Nations and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)? I think Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno has already responded about the different levels of cooperation between the United Nations and ECOWAS. I would like to add two comments: the first is that we should perhaps continue to make better use of those frameworks, and the second is that the Council has already begun a fruitful dialogue with ECOWAS. I think that that can also be improved.

Last but not least, the establishment of the United Nations office for West Africa will certainly be critical to improving that cooperation.

With regard to the role of countries that export arms in West Africa, I recall that paragraph 102 of the report deals with that. It is clearly mentioned that

> "Concerted measures should be taken by the appropriate United Nations organs, including the Security Council, and international and national partners to identify those engaged in the illicit trade of arms to West Africa and to stem their activities." (*S/2001/434, para. 102*)

How can we make sure that a regional strategy can alleviate the double fatigue in humanitarian assistance, both among the host countries and among the international donors? I think that Ms. McAskie might like to respond to this question, which was raised by the representative of Colombia. What I can say is just that it seems to me that, as far as the host countries are concerned, the international humanitarian agencies are already trying to help by including host communities in their humanitarian assistance in order to alleviate their fatigue in supporting the refugees.

The representative of Mauritius asked if reflections are ongoing in the Secretariat on the implementation plan. Yes, we have the interim inter-agency mission task force, which is working every week and devising ways and means of implementing the recommendations, including in terms of human resources; yes, because we have already developed a matrix of the different recommendations; yes, because the report has already been distributed on the ground and to the different partners to request their contribution to the implementation; and, last but not least, yes, because the Secretary-General has already designated the Deputy Secretary-General to coordinate the efforts of all concerned towards the implementation of the recommendations.

Last but not least, several interlocutors raised the issue of cooperation and strengthening ECOWAS and the issue of sanctions against Liberia. Members will note that I did not develop those issues because, first, with respect to the sanctions against Liberia, the Council has already had a meeting that took our recommendations into account; and because, secondly, with respect to strengthening the capacity of ECOWAS, this is really the underlying pattern of the entire report and I did not think it was necessary to underline it again.

The President: I thank all of our briefers today for elucidating their views on the subject. We can all see that there is a lot of work still to be done here and we look forward to cooperating with them all as we move ahead.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4320

Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

Provisional

4320th meeting

Tuesday, 15 May 2001, 12.15 p.m.
New York

President	Mr. Cunningham	(United States of America)
Members	Bangladesh	Mr. Amin
	China	Mr. Chen Xu
	Colombia	Mrs. Lloreda
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Mali	Mr. Konfourou
	Mauritius	Mr. Latona
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Singapore	Mr. Bhatia
	Tunisia	Ms. Achouri
	Ukraine	Mr. Herasymenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Harrison

Agenda

The situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

01-37265 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 12.15 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"Recalling all previous resolutions and statements of its President regarding the situation between Ethiopia and Eritrea, the Security Council emphasizes the importance of the commitments undertaken by the Government of the State of Eritrea and the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities signed in Algiers on 18 June 2000 (S/2000/601) and the subsequent Peace Agreement between the parties (S/2000/1183) signed in Algiers on 12 December 2000 ('Algiers Agreements').

"The Security Council reiterates its strong support for the Secretary-General's role in helping to implement the Agreements, including through his own good offices, and for the efforts of his Special Representative. It further expresses its appreciation for the continued role of the Organization of African Unity in helping to implement the Algiers Agreements.

"The Security Council also reiterates its appreciation for the continued deployment of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) both to the troop-contributing countries and to those Member States that have provided UNMEE with additional assets.

"The Security Council encourages both parties to continue working towards the full and prompt implementation of the Agreements and, in this context, to take concrete confidence-building measures. The Council further reaffirms its continued commitment to a peaceful definitive settlement of the conflict. In this connection, the Council notes with satisfaction that the parties have agreed to the Secretary-General's proposal of 1 May 2001, on the composition of the Boundary and Claims Commissions, critical components to the peaceful definitive settlement of the conflict. It now calls on the parties to fully cooperate with the Boundary Commission and to fulfil their financial responsibilities regarding the Boundary Commission's work.

"The Security Council stresses that the parties must provide free movement and access for UNMEE and its supplies as required throughout the territories of the parties, without any restrictions, including within the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ) and the 15 km wide adjacent area. Free and unhindered access for UNMEE is a fundamental condition for the success of the peacekeeping operation. The Security Council emphasizes further that the purpose of the TSZ is to separate the parties' armed forces. The TSZ must be completely demilitarized. The civilian populations inside the TSZ should be supported by an appropriate but limited number of Eritrean civilian militia and police.

"The Security Council calls on the parties to cooperate fully and expeditiously with UNMEE in the implementation of its mandate and to abide scrupulously by the letter and spirit of their agreements, particularly regarding the inviolability of the TSZ. It also calls on both parties to exercise restraint in their public statements.

"The Security Council further calls on the parties to continue to facilitate mine action in coordination with the United Nations Mine Action Service. It encourages the parties to exercise caution in returning civilians to the TSZ before it has been adequately demined. The Council further calls for the immediate establishment of a secure air corridor between Addis Ababa and Asmara that does not require a detour through other countries. It also calls on Eritrea to conclude the necessary Status of Forces Agreement for UNMEE.

"The Security Council notes that, in accordance with paragraph 16 of resolution 1298 (2000) of 17 May 2000, the arms embargo on the parties expires on 16 May 2001. The Council

recognizes that the Algiers Agreements are consistent with paragraphs 2 through 4 of resolution 1298 (2000). Under the current circumstances, the measures imposed by paragraph 6 of the same resolution have not been extended by the Council beyond 16 May 2001.

"The Security Council urges the parties to ensure that efforts are redirected from weapons procurement and other military activities towards the reconstruction and development of both economies, and regional reconciliation, with a view to achieving stability in the Horn of Africa. The Council reiterates its encouragement of Member States to exercise the highest degree of responsibility in discouraging arms flows to countries and regions emerging from armed conflicts.

"The Security Council remains vigilant and expresses its intention to take appropriate measures if the situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia again threatens regional peace and security.

"The Security Council will remain seized of the matter."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2001/14.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

Before adjourning, I wish, on behalf of the Council members, to extend a warm send-off to the Security Council mission due to depart this evening to the Great Lakes region. We wish the members of the mission a safe and successful trip and look forward to their return and reporting.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4321

Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

Provisional

4321st meeting

Friday, 18 May 2001, 10.30 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Cunningham	(United States of America)
Members:	Bangladesh	Mr. Ahsan
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	Colombia	Mr. Franco
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Mali	Mr. Kassé
	Mauritius	Mr. Latona
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Singapore	Ms. Lee
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Youssef
	Ukraine	Mr. Krokhmal
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon

Agenda

The situation in East Timor

Interim report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (S/2001/436).

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

01-37679 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in East Timor

Interim report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (S/2001/436)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Australia, Brazil, Canada, Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, Portugal, the Republic of Korea and Sweden in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Ms. Wensley (Australia), Mr. Fonseca (Brazil), Mr. Heinbecker (Canada), Mr. Widodo (Indonesia), Mr. Akasaka (Japan), Mr. MacKay (New Zealand), Mr. Brito (Portugal), Mr. Sun Joun-yung (Republic of Korea) and Mr. Schori (Sweden) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Annabi to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend invitations under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Xanana Gusmão, President of the National Council of Timorese Resistance, and to Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Member of the Transitional Cabinet of East Timor responsible for Foreign Affairs.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Gusmão to take a seat at the Council table.

I invite Mr. Ramos-Horta to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2001/436, which contains the interim report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET).

On behalf of all Council members, I would like to welcome Xanana Gusmão and José Ramos-Horta's participation in this meeting. The Council has talked about the concept of Timorization and hearing directly from the two of them is a tangible reflection of that process, going a step further than we did in January, when Mr. Ramos-Horta participated with Sergio Vieira de Mello in the Council discussion leading to the decision to extend the mandate of UNTAET.

There are other significant East Timorese voices, including those of the leaders of the newly registered political parties. It will be important for UNTAET to ensure that the full range of East Timorese views is communicated to the Council, especially in the post-election period. We look forward to welcoming soon East Timor's participation in the Council, not under rule 39, but as a full-fledged Member of the United Nations.

In that regard, I would note that Council members have agreed that Mr. Gusmão and Mr. Ramos-Horta will speak before Council members and other Member States take the floor. We have a full programme to get through in a limited period and we will try to move along quickly.

I give the floor to Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

Mr. Annabi: It is with a deep sense of humility that I take the floor today because, however much we

try to learn and know about the situation in East Timor, we will never know as much as our colleagues from East Timor. That is why I am particularly please that Xanana Gusmão and José Ramos-Horta have joined us this morning and that they will have the opportunity to brief the Council themselves on how they see the situation in East Timor.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General of 2 May, submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1338 (2001) of 31 January. By that resolution, the Council decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) until 31 January next year. The Council requested the Secretary-General to report to it by 30 April 2001 on the implementation of the mandate, including military and political assessments of the situation on the ground and their implications for the size, structure and deployment of UNTAET.

The report covers developments in the political transition and, since its publication, there have been a number of developments which I would like to recall briefly.

Under the provisions of the UNTAET regulation on the election of the Constituent Assembly, the Secretary-General has appointed the Commissioners of the Independent Electoral Commission and five political parties to date have applied for registration to participate in the election. As of today, UNTAET's Civil Registration Unit has registered some 390,000 East Timorese for the elections. There have been some technical difficulties, as members of the Council may be aware, but additional equipment has arrived and UNTAET is working very hard to complete the registration exercise by the 20 June deadline so as to enable the ballot to occur on 30 August, as anticipated.

On the economic side, the major developments in the rehabilitation of the economy and infrastructure are covered in the report. Therefore, I will not repeat them. I should simply say that, as regards the exploitation of oil and gas resources in the Timor Sea, very useful talks were held with the Government of Australia at the beginning of this month. These talks were held in a constructive spirit. The next round is scheduled to take place in Dili later this month, at which time work will begin on the drafting of the text of a treaty.

I wish to say a word about refugees. The visits undertaken by UNTAET's Chief of Staff to four refugee camps in West Timor from 9 to 11 April were the main development covered in the report, but I regret to have to inform the Council that, since then, there has been no tangible progress in resolving the situation of the refugees. Discussions between UNTAET and the Indonesian authorities continue and the Indonesian authorities have informed UNTAET that they plan to undertake a one-day registration of the refugees in West Timor in June. As members will recall, this registration had been scheduled for this month, but it has now been postponed to next month.

At the last Security Council meeting on East Timor on 5 April, I undertook to revert to the question of the abduction of East Timorese women to West Timor. As members of the Council will appreciate, in the absence of a permanent international presence in West Timor following the brutal murders of three workers from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the continuing presence of militia, obtaining concrete information has proven very difficult. Indonesian human rights and non-governmental organizations monitoring the camps have attempted to gather information on these cases, but their access to the camps is limited and, where contact is made, many of the women are reluctant to speak. Most cases remain unknown until a woman returns to East Timor and makes a complaint. Of the 25 abduction and rape cases currently under investigation by UNTAET's Serious Crimes Unit, one woman remains in West Timor. UNTAET is seeking to pursue this matter during the course of its bilateral negotiations on outstanding issues with the Indonesian Government. These negotiations actually resumed this week.

The Secretary-General refers in his report to President Wahid's decree of 24 April, establishing an ad hoc tribunal to deal with gross violations of human rights in East Timor, that will enable the first Indonesian trials to start. However, the decree limits the tribunal's jurisdiction to acts committed after the ballot of 30 August 1999, thus excluding earlier atrocities from prosecution. Mr. Vieira de Mello has urged the Indonesian authorities to reissue the decree without temporal restrictions.

On 4 May a Jakarta court handed down sentences ranging from 10 to 20 months to six men, in connection with the killings on 6 September 2000 of three UNHCR staff members in West Timor. The international community received this outcome with shock and

disbelief. Clearly, given the gravity of those crimes, this cannot be the last word. We have since been informed that the Indonesian prosecutor has appealed the judgement.

As the Council requested, the report addresses the issue of security. The overall security situation is currently good, but the report also identifies risks, both internal and external, especially in view of the heightened and sensitive political season ahead, which will conclude with the formation of the first Government of an independent East Timor. Given the uncertain outlook on security, the Secretary-General concludes in his report that it would be prudent to maintain the military component of UNTAET essentially in its present form until the East Timorese Government has established itself. The Secretary-General will of course keep this matter under review and will propose any adjustments warranted by the situation.

With regard to the post-independence presence of the United Nations, planning is under way in Dili, where a working group has been established. For a number of weeks, that working group has been working to prepare appropriate plans. Here at Headquarters, an integrated mission task force has also begun its work to support and complement the work of the working group in Dili and to effect coordination among the organizations concerned. A team of experts has visited East Timor to review UNTAET's assets to determine their future utility and possible disposition. A further step has been taken with the appointment of a senior United Nations official to coordinate planning between United Nations Headquarters and the field. That official will travel to East Timor next week. The donor conference to be held in Canberra, Australia, in mid-June will also provide an opportunity to review this work prior to the next report to the Security Council, which is scheduled for the end of July.

To conclude, the Secretary-General is aware of concerns among Member States regarding the level of resources committed to this operation. However, he is also conscious of the comprehensive responsibility the United Nations has assumed in East Timor. He therefore favours a prudent approach that seeks to safeguard the international community's considerable investment in East Timor's future. His report at the end of July will a provide further opportunity to review the situation.

The President: I would now like to give the floor to Mr. Gusmão, President of the National Council of Timorese Resistance.

Mr. Gusmão: First of all, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for granting me the honour of addressing the Council, thus giving us an opportunity to share some of our major concerns with the Council at this stage of the transitional process in East Timor.

Three main issues have been recurrently raised by the Council. We bring these issues to the Council's attention because they are yet to be resolved and continue to deserve our attention and concern. Those issues are justice and reconciliation, the security situation and the prospects for development as a whole.

The East Timorese leadership is often questioned on its stance regarding the accountability of the perpetrators of the crimes committed in 1999, both before and after the United Nations-organized popular consultation. Just as often, we have stated that justice and reconciliation are two components of a process that must proceed alongside each other. This responsibility is equally shared by the international community and ourselves. The crimes committed in East Timor have caused immense grief, great suffering and endless pain, first and foremost to the children, women and men of our country. However, they were also an affront to the international community, which was already committed to the consultation process and was mobilizing to enable our people to freely choose their future. We therefore believe that the international community should take primary responsibility in bringing about justice, while we, the East Timorese, will bear the responsibility for, and concentrate on, the reconciliation process.

The international community and, indeed, the East Timorese have been understanding towards Indonesia and have repeatedly given it opportunities to implement that which has been promised so many times, namely, the punishment of the perpetrators of the violence. Unfortunately, as of today, the response has not been satisfactory, as shown by the appalling verdicts given to the confessed authors of the murder of the three staff members of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

We wish to reaffirm before the Council that we remain greatly committed to the reconciliation process. Last week, a meeting was held in Bali, and next week another one will be held in East Timor, with leaders of

the pro-autonomy factions. We have been extending an olive branch for some time, and we will continue to do so; for we are aware that this will be a long process. However, we believe that the much-needed stability in East Timor will face great difficulties if we do not carry that process to success.

At this point we deem the security situation in East Timor to be under control. To avoid confusion, however, a distinction must be made between the violence and offences presently being committed in East Timor and the infiltrations and attacks at the border. The nature and causes of each of these types of security situations are substantially different. One type is often reported in a dramatic tone; but official civilian police statistics and analysis easily prove that it stands at levels far less dramatic than in the overwhelming majority of capital cities throughout the world. The present socio-economic situation of the population is undoubtedly a decisive contributing factor.

The situation at the border is a different issue altogether. The militia groups continue to reign with impunity and control the remaining refugees in West Timor. The incursions and infiltrations through our common border are still occurring, and very recently five new ones took place. After a year and a half of hoping that a change could be brought about, stern action is needed. This is a major concern to all of us, given the impact it still has in destabilizing our process.

We seek a good-neighbourly relationship with Indonesia, based on mutual respect and understanding. The East Timorese leadership has often met in Jakarta with members of the Indonesian Government and other institutions, with the goal of normalizing these relationships, bridging existing gaps and gaining mutual understanding and respect. We also wish to state that this will continue, for both countries are in need of peace and stability, and both peoples deserve them. We are sure that Indonesia understands that we, as a small country with a small population, not only do not constitute any threat to neighbouring countries, but, more importantly, are truly committed to building a new relationship with our neighbours, looking towards the future.

In this context, I wish to ask the Council members to continue their support for East Timor. We are aware of the demands placed on the Council by so many other unfortunate and difficult situations around the world. We are equally aware of how much the international community has invested in keeping peace in East Timor. We are very thankful. But because we know that the Council is engaged in making East Timor a successful case, I urge the members of the Council to keep the peacekeeping mission in our country. We understand that a mission such as this would have to be downsized after independence is declared. However, we will continue to need the assistance of the international community both at the security level and in assisting and advising the future leaders during the initial phase of independence.

The success of this mission is the success of the international community as much as it is that of the East Timorese. Together we can uphold the values of peace, justice, democracy, human rights and abidance by international law.

For us East Timorese the success of this mission means, above all, ensuring our preparedness to take up the responsibility of governing our sovereign country in a democratic and sustainable manner. We will achieve that only with peace and stability, and for that we need the continued support of the international community. I can assure the Council that in some years' time, the East Timorese will address this Council and will express their gratitude for having trusted us when we made our requests. We will be proud to come to the Council with an expression of gratitude from our people, stating that we will stand with the Council as a member of the international community that relates to its partners like any other country, but that no longer needs to ask for continued assistance. Only then will we be able to share with the Council the joy of true freedom.

Our process is moving ahead, and we will soon enter yet another stage — a decisive and determining one for us: the turning point, which will be the elections and the establishment of democratically elected institutions.

The election results will be a reference for the establishment of a Timorese Government, whose structure we are tuning and finalizing. As soon as it is designed, the resources allocated to its institutions will be more efficiently used, for they will be targeted according to a previously agreed administrative architecture. It will be a moment of paramount importance in that it will represent the first step towards taking full responsibility for our country.

East Timor still lacks a structured economic system. Important steps have been made in part of the regulatory framework, and there is a consensus among the political forces on the open and free-market economic system to be set up. However, we have yet to define the vision for future development.

I am pleased to inform the Council that we will soon set up a group to work full time on strategic development planning for the short, medium and long term. This is an East Timorese initiative that has the support of World Bank President Jim Wolfensohn and the full involvement of other interested parties.

This task is one we had intended to initiate sooner, after the three conferences held by the East Timorese to that effect. The demands of the process, and the lack of human and material resources in the country to enable a full-time commitment to it hampered our initial intention. I will be personally involved in this process, and I assure the Council that it is also in our best interest that investments made by the international community be efficiently used. We wish to design the strategic guidelines for the development of East Timor as the most effective means to correctly allocate both human and material resources and to obtain genuine sustainable development for the newly emerging independent nation.

As we have often stated, development is a hollow concept in the absence of democracy and freedom. However, our people, who have fought and suffered for so long, deserve only the very best that we, hand in hand with our partners in the international community, can offer them.

The international community has been assisting us generously in maintaining freedom. We will reciprocate by building a democratic country that will contribute peace to the region and the world.

The President: I call on Mr. Ramos-Horta.

Mr. Ramos-Horta: Congratulations, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency for this month.

I apologize for not having a written contribution. I will just add some comments to what President Xanana Gusmão has just stated.

The first comment I would like to make is that by June we will have dissolved the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT), an umbrella organization that was vital for many years in our struggle to bring together all East Timorese groups for one common goal. It was under that particular umbrella and that flag that we went to the polls on 30 August 1999. But as the political process unfolds, it is also time for us to give space to and encourage the multi-party system: plurality. It was our plan all along, from the very beginning, to downsize the CNRT itself as the East Timor Transitional Administration takes shape, so as not to have a parallel and competitive institution. We believe that in June it will be time for the CNRT to be disbanded so that the parties can prepare much more effectively for the elections for the Constituent Assembly, which we hope will take place on 30 August.

After its dissolution the CNRT will be replaced by an even more encompassing and important instrument: the national pact. We have had discussions with all political parties in East Timor, and we are in the process now of drafting a comprehensive document that would contain important elements such as commitment to democracy, tolerance, non-violence, respect for ethnic and religious minorities and compliance with international standards of human rights and the rule of law. But that document would also bind all political parties, regardless of the election results of 30 August and the composition of the Government, to honour existing international agreements. These would be signed by all parties in East Timor and would be witnessed by the two Catholic Bishops of East Timor and Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello. This would send a reassuring message to our people and to the international community.

I would also like to add some comments on the verdict handed down on the assassins of the three workers from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). But before that I would like to remind the Council of our efforts, which have been known to you for many months — over a year — to seek to understand the difficulties which the democratically elected Government of Indonesia faces.

As you know, time and again we have stated, in agreement with the position taken by the Secretary-General, that we should allow time, we should trust the Indonesian legal system to bring to justice the perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity. We have expressed our trust and confidence in the integrity of the Attorney General, our friend Marzuki Daruzman. It was therefore with profound

sadness and shock that we heard of the sentence handed down to the confessed assassins of three international humanitarian workers — 10 to 20 months for those who committed a crime and vaunted their pride in doing it.

How can we, as human beings with a conscience, react as if nothing really serious had happened? Can we continue to place that trust and confidence in the system that has produced this verdict? We are outraged, like the rest of the international community, and it really discouraged all of us, including the people of East Timor, regarding the direction the Indonesian justice system is taking in regard to other serious crimes committed in the course of 1999 by senior Indonesian military officers and East Timorese under the responsibility of the Indonesian army. We hope that we have not heard the last of this from the Indonesian side.

I would also elaborate briefly on the question of the reported violence in East Timor. As President Xanana Gusmão has indicated, we have to make two distinctions. First there is the situation along the border, with sporadic incursions from West Timor into the areas protected by the peacekeeping forces — Australia, New Zealand, Nepal and others. Unfortunately, this happens in contravention of so many pledges we have received from the Indonesian side with regard to disarming and dismantling the militias to enable the refugees — as long as they are unprotected refugees – to be there without fear. Yet the militias continue to control the camps. Assistant Secretary-General Annabi has referred to the continuing presence of rape victims, who are unprotected.

What is tragic is that on our part we have explained to the Council and to the Indonesian authorities our vision of peace, of friendship with the Republic of Indonesia, in particular with the province which is our neighbour, West Timor. If the militias were to be disarmed, as has been promised; if West Timor ceased to be a base of instability and aggression against peacekeeping forces and East Timor, we would create the conditions for East Timor — the independent East Timor — and in particular West Timor, to develop relations whereby we could have free trade across the border and free movement of people; where we could develop joint strategies for the eradication of malaria and for reducing poverty.

West Timor — even though it has not faced a war for the 50 years since Indonesian independence — is even poorer than East Timor. The people in West Timor rightly resent the fact that the international community always pays more attention to East Timor than to them in terms of their economic well-being.

We have discussed this vision with Indonesian authorities, with President Abdurrahman Wahid and Foreign Minister Alwi Shihab. But as long as West Timor remains a very unstable region on our own border — instead of conditions being created for West Timor to attract international investors in order to reduce unemployment there — we see that the realization of this vision, this dream, is almost impossible.

As the Assistant Secretary-General has mentioned, the negotiations for a new revenue-sharing agreement on the resources of the Timor Gap area, oil and gas, are now proceeding at a faster pace, and very positively. I would even dare to hope that in two months a new agreement should be signed to enable the investors to begin to draw up the contracts for pipelines to bring the gas from the Timor Sea to the Northern Territory of Australia.

The win-win theory suggests that the two sides emerge from the negotiation process happy. Maybe the two sides might not come out entirely happy, but neither side is angry or disappointed. Australia is a close friend and neighbour, a strategic partner of East Timor, and we believe it is in our common interest to reach an agreement sooner for the benefit of the Northern Territory of Australia and particularly for the people of East Timor, who need those revenues.

The Council has made a considerable investment to bring this process to the point where we are today. There were ups and downs, frustrations and disappointments, but that is very natural in such a complex process, particularly when we bear in mind where we were in September 1999. Looking at where we are today, we see that dramatic progress has been made in every sector. Much more remains to be done. For progress to continue, as President Gusmão has stated, there has to be a positive, continuing signal on the part of the international community of its engagement with East Timor.

There are two pillars of the whole United Nations mission in East Timor. First, the security pillar. That is to say that as much as we understand that East Timor is

not, unfortunately, the only conflict in the world demanding the Council's attention, it is an area where the Council has made serious investments in resources and time and where there is a real promise of success, for the good name of the international community, for each of you and, certainly more importantly, for the people of East Timor. Therefore we ask you to continue to insure that whatever consideration you will give in terms of downsizing the peacekeeping force in East Timor, it must also be conditioned by developments on the security front.

We are conscious that we must intensify, obviously, the process of Timorization and capacity-building so that independence will take place, as we have promised, in the first three months of next year. So far, so good. The calendar can be implemented as promised.

I turn to the subject of our own responsibilities, what the East Timorese themselves will do, together with the United Nations, to ensure internal peace in East Timor. In terms of external security and other aspects of security, including internal, we rely on the peacekeeping force, the civilian police and the institutions of law and order that have been created. But there is also the process of reconciliation. That is our responsibility, and we can assure the Council that we are continuing to work hard on this front with those who in the past favoured autonomy within Indonesia. We have stated to them that voting for autonomy, holding those views, does not constitute a crime. Any East Timorese can say, "I want East Timor to be part of Tasmania", or "East Timor should be part of Alaska." It is their right, as long as no crime, no violence, is perpetrated to achieve those goals. This is the message we have conveyed to the pro-autonomy elements: reconciliation, yes, but we cannot overlook crime and disregard justice.

In this regard, the Timorese side will continue to work with out brothers and sisters from the other side in continuing the process of reconciliation. A week from now a large group of pro-autonomy elements will be travelling to Timor for a meeting with us. This will be the fifth, sixth or seventh meeting we have had in different locations and at different levels.

But the issue of justice remains a responsibility of the international community. In this regard, I will conclude by saying that the Serious Crimes Unit of the Untied Nations in East Timor must be supported and strengthened so that it can continue the extraordinary work that it has already begun. At the same time, the Indonesian authorities must not be allowed to forget the pledges they have made, to us to and to the members of the Council, that the perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity in East Timor will be brought to trial.

The President: I shall now give the floor to members of the Council.

Mr. Eldon (United Kingdom): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for a very useful briefing. It is particularly good to see here today Xanana Gusmão and José Ramos-Horta. For my delegation, it has been particularly useful to hear at first hand their assessment of the preparations for the elections in East Timor and for independence. I should also, at this stage, associate myself with the remarks that will be made later in the debate by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union.

We very much welcome the Secretary-General's report. We agree with his assessment that the security situation remains uncertain. The military presence of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) should therefore remain at its current level until a security assessment shows that downsizing is feasible. It may well be that this will not be possible before the election.

But we should remain cost-conscious. There is a need for the Transitional Administration to improve its management of the budget, and we have noted in particular the lack of progress in cost recovery — for example, in terms of electricity and water charges, vehicle registration and United Nations airport flight charges. We understand, for example, that in the last 12 months about $10 million worth of electricity has effectively been given away because electricity metres have not been installed. It would be very interesting to hear from Mr. Annabi whether consideration has been given to alternative charging structures in the interim, such as, for example, a flat-rate electricity charge for households.

The United Kingdom remains deeply concerned about the conditions in West Timor. This issue was an important focus of the Security Council mission last year, and the situation is no less worrying now. I would like to encourage the Indonesian Government to conduct its promised registration programme without further delay. It is most important that the refugees who

choose to return should have an opportunity to register to vote in the elections. We also look forward to an early mission of the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator to assess security conditions in West Timor. Personally, I am sorry that it has not been possible to send the mission before now, since it is a key component in terms of looking at the possibility of getting international agencies back into the West.

Nevertheless, we welcome the steps that have been taken by the Indonesian Attorney General to investigate fully the human rights violations and other violations committed in East Timor following the consultation. We also welcome his intention to appeal with regard to the, frankly, derisory sentences handed down for the Atambua killings. I think José Ramos-Horta's intervention amply demonstrates the feelings in East Timor about this, and I know that there are very similar concerns in the Council. Indeed, the Council will need to continue to monitor this process closely.

We hope that the Indonesian Government will complete arrangements for the ad hoc human rights tribunal so that it can begin its work without delay. We would also urge the Government of Indonesia to amend the decree promulgating the decision to establish the tribunal so that it extends also to crimes committed before the August 1999 ballot.

Finally, we must look to the future. Later in the summer the Council will have an opportunity to look closely at the planning for a post-independence United Nations presence. We strongly support the decision that has been taken by the Secretariat to establish an integrated mission task force to look at this issue. Planning for the follow-on process must involve relevant branches of the Secretariat and United Nations agencies, as well as bringing in vital input from UNTAET and Dili. It is important also that this planning include provisions for a realistic exit strategy; but the United Kingdom is convinced that the international community must remain engaged in East Timor for some years beyond independence.

Ms. Lee (Singapore): We thank Mr. Hédi Annabi for introducing the interim report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), which Singapore fully supports. His further updates on the situation in East Timor were also very helpful. We warmly welcome Mr. Xanana Gusmão to the Security Council, and we are also pleased to see Mr. José Ramos-Horta in this Chamber again. Having tasked UNTAET with progressively delegating further authority to the East Timorese people, it is appropriate that the Security Council increasingly hears directly from East Timorese leaders as a clear demonstration of the Council's commitment to the Timorization efforts. Their appraisal of how UNTAET is performing will be an important reality check on whether the United Nations is moving on the right track. More importantly, their vision for the future of East Timor will be instrumental in shaping Security Council deliberations on the post-independence phase, providing a valuable input for the next report, on which the integrated mission task force for East Timor at United Nations Headquarters and the working group in Dili are no doubt working hard.

The people of East Timor must now harness the determination that carried them through the long years of struggle as they make the transition to independence. They must now apply their stamina to the long-term goal of making East Timor a viable and sustainable country. Rowing a small boat in rough seas requires unity of purpose and direction and the collective strength and determination of each and every East Timorese. Reconciliation among all East Timorese is therefore important. A tolerant and cohesive East Timorese society and a reinvigorated East Timorese national identity would also encourage the much-needed East Timorese diaspora to return to East Timor and contribute to its independence efforts.

Singapore completely agrees with the Secretary-General's conclusion, in paragraph 33 of the report (S/2001/436), favouring

> "a prudent approach, which seeks to safeguard the international community's considerable investment in East Timor's future."

A stable and lasting foundation for East Timor cannot be built overnight. UNTAET, with the support of the international community, has made significant progress in important areas in East Timor. We should concentrate our efforts on consolidating and advancing the gains made by UNTAET and focus on helping East Timor to safely set sail on its own.

As the United Nations begins the process of thinking through its future role in East Timor, it is crucial that we bear in mind the broader political context and security implications that East Timor has for the region. East Timor's future is intimately and

inextricably intertwined with that of Indonesia, its closest neighbour. Both countries are undergoing painful transitions and adjustments, and how they eventually fare will have an important and far-reaching bearing on the region. Special care must be taken to support — not jeopardize — the development of sound and lasting democratic institutions in both countries.

We strongly believe that the United Nations and the international community have an important responsibility and obligation to remain engaged in East Timor to help maintain peace as well as rehabilitate the country. Indeed, much of what UNTAET has achieved would not have been possible without the resources and political support provided by the United Nations and the international community. The exit of the United Nations should be neither precipitate nor based on unrealistic time-frames. Instead, it should be predicated on key objectives or benchmarks relating to what we hope to achieve in East Timor, all of which must contribute to laying a firm foundation for a stable and viable independent East Timor. In this regard, we look forward to the July report of the Secretary-General that will deal with this issue.

Until then, the continuing militia and refugee problem, and the domestic violence, which might heighten in the lead-up to the elections, clearly show the need for a continued strong United Nations peacekeeping presence in East Timor. At a recent informal meeting of countries contributing troops to UNTAET, some of us heard about how the peacekeeping force is helping to provide internal security in East Timor in cooperation with the civilian police component. It is certainly true that a strong and visible peacekeeping presence plays an important pre-emptive and preventive role in maintaining stability in the territory. In addition, we believe that a stable and secure environment is essential to improve the investment climate in East Timor. By sending positive signals to international investors, we would be helping to bolster the economic development of East Timor, thus contributing to its long-term viability, which would eventually reduce its dependence on international assistance.

The refugees of East Timorese origin still remaining in West Timor is an important outstanding issue which should be resolved urgently. We therefore note with great interest Indonesia's efforts in preparing for the registration exercise currently scheduled for 6 June this year. That would be an important first step towards helping these refugees. This is not just a simple technical affair, but one involving many delicate issues. As such, we believe that that the United Nations should also be involved in all aspects of the exercise. Singapore had hoped that the United Nations Security Coordinator could have dispatched the inter-agency security assessment mission to West Timor sooner. It could potentially have paved the way for a larger United Nations field presence to help facilitate the registration process, followed by the resettlement or repatriation exercises.

We are aware of and fully understand the disappointment and indignation that have been expressed by others with regard to the sentences that have been handed down in connection with the killing last year of three staff members of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Singapore has always been a strong advocate for the safety and protection of United Nations and associated personnel. The brutal killing of unarmed United Nations personnel cannot go unpunished. However, we believe that Indonesia's judicial process should be allowed to run its course. In this regard, we are also heartened by the decision of the Indonesian prosecution to appeal the sentences. We are confident that Indonesia understands both the seriousness that the international community accords to this matter and the importance of dealing with it in a credible way that is commensurate with its scope. In this light, we also welcome the first steps that have been taken against suspects accused of crimes against humanity and other serious crimes committed during the violence in 1999, including the establishment of an ad hoc tribunal to deal with post-ballot violence. We hope that further concrete steps will be taken by Indonesia, including working closely with UNTAET, to bring those responsible to justice.

Ultimately, the success of East Timor depends on the East Timorese themselves. Up to this point, the determination and commitment displayed by the East Timorese people have been reassuring and have given much cause for hope. If I may develop the maritime analogy that I used at the beginning of my statement, the international community is helping East Timor to prepare for the next phase of its sea journey. External elements, like weather conditions, are clearly beyond our control; they are difficult for us to predict. However, we have the capacity to take steps that help enhance the seaworthiness of the East Timorese vessel,

and we must do so. These include putting up the mast, repairing the hull and providing the crew with navigational and other necessary skills to steer the vessel. If we succeed, we will help launch the flagship of a true United Nations success story.

Mr. Shen Guofang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this important meeting today. I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report, and Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his detailed briefing. I also welcome among us Mr. Gusmão and Mr. Ramos-Horta, and thank them for their important statements.

China notes with pleasure that the work towards independence has been proceeding in an orderly manner. A few days ago, work began on registering voters for the election of the Constituent Assembly. The active participation of the political parties in East Timor testifies to the fact that they take the process of democracy and independence seriously.

The problem of refugees in West Timor is still very disquieting. China believes that the decision by the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator to organize and lead an inter-agency security assessment mission to West Timor this month is very important. We hope that that measure will help to provide assistance to refugees in dire need and accelerate the repatriation process, so that they can fully participate in the independence process in East Timor and exercise their due democratic rights.

We note that, although the overall security situation in East Timor is good, as mentioned in the Secretary-General's report, the local population remains highly concerned as to whether the political process will continue to develop peacefully. A number of recent incidents prove that the population's concern for the future is not unfounded. Violence has erupted on occasion, as indicated in paragraphs 19 and 20 of the report, targeting civilians and United Nations peacekeepers. These acts are totally unacceptable and the perpetrators should be brought to justice.

Experience shows that, along with the acceleration of the process leading to political independence, the opportunities for an exacerbation of the tensions will also multiply. We therefore endorse the relevant analysis and recommendations of the Secretary-General. We believe that, against the backdrop of an uncertain security situation in East Timor, UNTAET should take measures to build the people's confidence in the orderly unfolding of the independence process so as to create a more stable social environment for the exercise of their democratic rights. In this regard, the cooperation and support of Indonesia are very important. I also wish to point out in this respect that the international community should support the stability of both Indonesia and East Timor, which remains important to peace and stability in Asia and the world as a whole.

UNTAET has established a working group on the ground to draft a post-transition plan and a corresponding body has been established at United Nations Headquarters to assist that group. These measures will help to increase East Timor's capacity for independent administration following its accession to independence. Meanwhile, China also hopes that the United Nations will respect and heed the aspirations of the East Timorese people and, on that basis, propose specific recommendations for every aspect of the transition of power for the Security Council's consideration.

The independence and self-sufficiency of East Timor require the political support of all Member States, as well as the generous assistance of the international community to the economic development of the territory. To that end, China has already provided every possible assistance and will continue to explore with East Timor the opportunities for promoting economic and trade relations and new channels for investment there.

Mr. Doutriaux (France) (*spoke in French*): I wish at the outset to thank Mr. Annabi for his very clear briefing, which perfectly reflects the outstanding job being done by the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) under the effective leadership of Mr. Vieira de Mello.

I wish to welcome Mr. Xanana Gusmão and Mr. José Ramos-Horta. Their statements bear witness to their courage and conviction and give a precise idea of the tremendous challenges that have already been faced. They indicate the steps that remain to be taken in order to attain our common objective — the establishment of an independent, democratic and viable East Timor — in the best possible circumstances and as soon as possible. We wish them every success in their courageous endeavour.

A statement will be made later by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the European

Union and I shall therefore confine myself to making a few comments.

I wish first to welcome the progress that has been made since our meeting of 5 April. It is broad and is helping to make UNTAET a success.

The main piece of good news is the fact that the process of preparing the elections to the Constituent Assembly is going smoothly. As noted by the Secretariat, the timetable is definitely tight if registration is to be completed by 20 June and the elections are to be held on the symbolic date of 30 August. Trying to respect these deadlines is, however, essential if momentum is not to be lost and if the aims of adopting a constitution in the following three months and achieving independence later are to be met.

The transition should be as speedy as possible. Speed is a prerequisite for success. Several examples of transitional authorities that have achieved their objectives testify to this, such as the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia, which lasted 18 months, and the United Nations Transitional Authority in Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium, which lasted barely two years.

A speedy transition should certainly not, however, be synonymous with disengagement. The tremendous investment that the international community has quite rightly made in Timor should not be wasted. More than $1 billion in multilateral assistance has been mobilized since October 1999. Today, one quarter of active Blue Helmets are deployed in UNTAET.

The transition must be flexible in order to respond as closely as possible to the needs of the Timorese. That is why we must answer the following questions: Is it, for instance, desirable for the expenditure linked to the cost of maintaining the military component to be 100 times greater than that of training of Timorese police? Is it desirable for the civilian police component, the utility of which is recognized by all, to be only one fifth the size of the military component? Is it necessary to maintain a military component of approximately 8,200 men, while barely 2,500 of these are stationed in the western part of East Timor to address the very real threat of militias active in West Timor? Are the UNTAET Blue Helmets in a better position than the civilian police units to maintain law and order?

These are all questions that we must ask if we are to undertake the necessary adaptations at the right time. The interim report that has just been issued contains sensible recommendations on UNTAET's desirable actions, maintaining the status quo, until the elections of 30 August. Clearly, there is no question of changing the international presence in the electoral context. As the Secretary-General rightly notes in his interim report, the electoral period will require particular vigilance.

It would be useful, however, if the next report, due in July, were to contain fresh recommendations on the possible ways in which UNTAET can be adapted after the elections but before independence. These recommendations should take account first and foremost of security conditions, needs on the ground and the wishes of the Timorese. There can be no compromise, for instance, where the security needs of personnel are concerned. In this respect, the verdict rendered by the Indonesian trial court in the case of the murder of three workers of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is very disappointing, to say the least. France welcomes the decision of the Indonesian prosecutor to appeal the sentences.

Particular attention must also be paid to the crucial question of the return of refugees. We note the intention of the Indonesian Government to organize the registration of refugees in West Timor, in principle on 6 June. This registration is supposed to be preceded by an information campaign in the camps from 25 to 27 May. Where do the preparations for this stand? What will be the roles of UNHCR and UNTAET? Will the security assessment mission of the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator, announced in the report for the month of May, actually take place? Is it likely to lead to a revised classification to level 5, which would authorize the return of United Nations personnel to the camps of West Timor?

We must consider the process of registering refugees in West Timor in conjunction with the electoral timetable in East Timor. Merging these processes is no easy task. The Indonesian authorities are indicating that, on the basis of registration on 6 June, they will be unable to undertake the first return operations until 28 June. For its part, UNTAET expects to complete the electoral rolls by 20 June. How can we reconcile these two timetables? Are special procedures envisaged? We must avoid creating a time bomb for the

new Timorese democracy by virtue of a group of refugees not having been able to participate in the voting.

Equally careful preparation must go into the post-independence period. The first stage of those preparations has begun with the setting up of planning structures, namely, a post-UNTAET working group in Dili and an integrated mission task force in New York. These two structures will serve as valuable tools in the preparation of the recommendations to be presented to donors at Canberra in mid-June and, pursuant to Security Council resolution 1338 (2001), to the Council itself by 31 July.

It would be interesting if, under the presidency of China, in July our Council were able to carry out its discussions in the presence of representatives of the United Nations Development Programme, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, as was the case last January. None of the players who will have a major part to play in the international presence during the post-independence period should be left out of the deliberation process.

Mr. Gatilov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to Mr. Annabi for his briefing on the situation in East Timor. We are also grateful for the participation in today's meeting of Mr. Xanana Gusmão and Mr. José Ramos-Horta, who have given us their appraisals of the situation in East Timor as it moves towards independence.

Our latest review of the situation in East Timor, including a study of the interim report of the Secretary-General, enables us to draw conclusions about the progress made in the territory's move towards independence. However, a great deal remains to be done to achieve that independence. In this connection, we view positively the activities of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), headed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Vieira de Mello. At the same time, along with obvious successes, we cannot fail to draw attention to remaining problems.

Among the most serious of those problems is that of refugees in West Timor. Unfortunately, the pro-integrationist militia has not yet been disarmed. That militia is not only preventing the return of refugees, it also continues to be a source of threats along the border with East Timor.

As far as we know, there has once again been a postponement in refugee registration. In that regard, there is still no certainty that registration will take place within the new time-frame. This issue is of substantial significance because the new postponement virtually eliminates the chances for participation in East Timor's general election for those refugees remaining in West Timor, who expect to be registered there as temporarily displaced persons and to return to their former residences after the elections.

We are also concerned about the fact that there has been an intensification of the political split within Timorese society because of differing views about conditions for the implementation of national reconciliation and about the draft of a future constitution. Unfortunately, the existing differences have not been kept within the bounds of civilized disagreement, but have spilled over into clashes among East Timorese.

The international community's attention has been drawn to the recent decision taken by an Indonesian court regarding one of the leaders of the pro-integrationist militia, Mr. Guterres. We are opposed to interference in the administration of justice in sovereign States, but we are convinced that those guilty of the terror unleashed in East Timor in connection with the holding of a referendum there, as well as those who attacked United Nations personnel in West Timor, must receive the proper punishment. We must take decisive measures to prevent similar incidents in the future.

A notable event in the internal political life of East Timor took place on 7 May. That day marked the start of the first census to be taken in the territory. That event took place along with the registration of voters, in the course of which over 42 per cent of the population has been registered. We trust that this can been considered a good guarantee for the successful conduct of planned activities.

With regard the further presence of the United Nations in East Timor, we believe that the concrete format and parameters of that presence will be determined in accordance with real requirements, and with the agreement of the authorities of an independent East Timor.

Mr. Ryan (Ireland): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for calling this open meeting, and to welcome our guests, Mr. Xanana Gusmão and Mr. José Ramos-Horta. We consider their participation in this meeting as a reflection of the close relationship between East Timor and the United Nations, and of the successful Timorization process, which is central to the move towards independence. We have listened carefully to their interventions, and we are moved by the statesmanlike quality and integrity of their remarks. We would also like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi for his full and informative briefing, although we are concerned about several elements in it.

Ireland associates itself fully with the statement that will be delivered shortly by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union. I will not repeat the views expressed therein, which we share, but will simply highlight a few issues which Ireland, as a country with a long-standing involvement in East Timor, considers to be of particular importance.

Since the establishment of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), in October 1999, significant progress has been made towards independence. We take this opportunity to pay tribute to the dedicated personnel working with the various components of the mission. As a result of the further development and intensification of that work, we look forward to the people of East Timor participating in truly democratic elections, which, in turn, will provide a solid foundation for the future. We hope that the political dissension within East Timor, in itself a positive sign of normalization, will be addressed by the relevant parties through debate and constitutional means, and that it will not lead to civic unrest and violence.

We are very heartened to hear from Mr. Ramos-Horta of the important components now under active consideration for the proposed national pact to be signed, inter alia, by all political parties in East Timor. Any points that may be at issue in this context require resolution through strength of argument rather than physical force. We therefore believe that extreme care must be taken to ensure that calm and stability are maintained during the election process and during the subsequent constitutional building period.

In that regard, Ireland remains concerned about the security situation and believes that the significant efforts of the international community should not be endangered by a premature reduction of troops. We agree fully with the Secretary-General's assessment that the military component of UNTAET should be maintained in its present form until the new Government in East Timor has established itself. We also believe that a substantial international presence will be necessary in the post-independence period. This should be commensurate with actual requirements and calibrated to a timetable of careful scrutiny and review. We look forward to the recommendations of the Secretary-General and to further discussions about the structure of such a presence, in which Ireland would hope to participate.

Ireland believes that significant progress towards successful elections is being made in East Timor through the registration process and through the all-important civic education programme. However, we are concerned about the pace of the refugee registration process in West Timor. Those who wish to vote in the elections for the Constituent Assembly in East Timor must be able to return there in time to register. We are very concerned to hear this morning from Mr. Annabi that for more than one month now there has not been further progress on the refugee issue. We urge the Government of Indonesia to implement fully and speedily its programme of repatriation and resettlement in this regard.

Ireland believes it is essential that those who have violated human rights and international humanitarian law should be prosecuted in conformity with international standards of justice and fairness. While we welcome the steps taken to investigate such violations, we are concerned about recent developments, including the light sentences handed down in connection with the killings of three personnel of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees in Atambua and the limited scope of the ad hoc human rights tribunal. We understand that these issues are under review. While we fully respect the separation of executive, legislative and judicial powers within Indonesia, we urge in the strongest terms the competent authorities to take full cognizance of the gravity of such acts and to ensure that the perpetrators of all such violence face the full force of the law. The punishment must fit the crime and must be seen to fit the crime. Mr. Ramos-Horta has just spoken eloquently and tellingly in this regard.

Ireland raised in a previous meeting the question of women who were abducted from East Timor during the conflict there, some of whom are now allegedly held in conditions of sexual slavery in West Timor. Ireland is extremely concerned about this matter. We are further concerned to hear today from Mr. Annabi about continuing difficulties in making progress with this problem. We urge in strong terms that the Indonesian authorities provide full cooperation in this urgent matter. We expect and require this cooperation.

Finally, let me affirm Ireland's commitment to supporting the people of East Timor, both during the period of transition to independence and after independence has been achieved.

Mr. Franco (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are grateful for the introduction of the Secretary-General's report, which makes an assessment of the political and military situation and of its repercussions on the scale and structure of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET).

In the debate held in January, there was contagious enthusiasm regarding the final process of bringing East Timor to independence. However, in this report we note concern as the independence of East Timor approaches. Colombia reaffirms what it expressed in the January debate: that the Security Council must take the measures necessary to allow UNTAET to complete its work, without time pressures that could compromise the future of the emerging administration of East Timor.

Holding the elections for the Constituent Assembly on 30 August 2001 will certainly be a test for the future Timorese nation. We have noted with satisfaction that to date more than 40 per cent of the population has been registered. The Constituent Assembly bears a great responsibility. In this regard, we support the actions taken to promote debate and to facilitate public participation in the future of East Timor. We believe that the voter education programmes that UNTAET is promoting are vitally important. It also seems appropriate to us that the decision concerning the date of East Timor's independence be taken in the light of the deliberations of the Constituent Assembly.

The refugee situation continues unresolved. We take note of the visit of the UNTAET chief of staff to four refugee camps at the beginning of April, together with officials of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration, with the aim of disseminating information on the security and political situations in East Timor. We hope that the registration day that the Indonesian Government will hold on 6 June 2001, according to the latest information, will make it possible to more clearly determine the number of refugees wishing to return to East Timor, so that they can do so before the closure of registration for the elections.

In this regard, I would like to state that it is necessary for the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator to rapidly present the results of the mission announced in paragraph 17 of the Secretary-General's report, to take place in May, in order to permit, hopefully, the prompt return of United Nations agencies to the refugee camps.

Reconciliation is one of the most important issues for the future of Timorese society. However, reconciliation cannot take place in an atmosphere of impunity. Those responsible for serious crimes must be brought to trial.

Colombia appreciates the efforts to establish harmonious relations between Indonesia and East Timor through confidence-building measures. We appreciate the efforts made by Mr. Ramos-Horta in that regard. However, equally important is the need to continue to improve the relations between UNTAET and the Government of Indonesia, in particularly the West Timorese officials. In that regard, Colombia welcomes the agreements reached at the recent meeting in Denpasar concerning refugee registration issues and former civil servants' pensions, as well as the proposals for future agreements on airline and postal services and maritime delimitation.

At the last debate, at the beginning of April, we referred extensively to the incidents of political violence in East Timor and the shadows that these cast over the democratic future of the country. In that regard, I would like on this occasion to highlight the content of paragraph 21 of the report, to the effect that the population fears that the political process will not remain peaceful. We urge that the greatest efforts be made to prevent outbreaks of political violence, taking into account, as Mr. Ramos-Horta said, not only internal but also external sources of violence.

With regard to border security, we are concerned by the claim that the pro-Indonesian militias operating

in West Timor have continued to advocate armed struggle to retake East Timor and that their overall capacity has not diminished. In this regard, we take note of the recommendation in the report that, taking into the account the uncertainty regarding how security conditions will develop, it would be advisable to maintain the military component as it is until the Government of East Timor has been established.

In conclusion, I wish to talk about the post-independence presence of the United Nations. In his report, the Secretary-General points out that when East Timor declares independence, it still will not have a properly functioning public administration and that it will take years to acquire many of the skills necessary for the administration to be fully functional. While this is not a surprise — and it seems to us a very realistic statement — it contrasts, as we said at the beginning of this statement, with the enthusiastic spirit of the debate held in January. It is a fact that East Timor will continue to need much assistance from the international community to guarantee its stability. Colombia agrees that the strength of the military component should be maintained and that this matter should be reviewed after the elections are held in August.

We have noted with great interest the establishment of a working group on planning for the phase following the withdrawal of UNTAET. We would like to ask Mr. Annabi if he can give us additional information on the integrated mission task force referred to in paragraph 29, established at United Nations Headquarters, that will assist and complement the working group on planning and coordinate the work of the organizations concerned.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): My delegation thanks Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi for introducing the comprehensive report of the Secretary-General and for updating the Council on recent developments in regard to political and economic issues, the status of refugees, and security.

My delegation welcomes the presence at our meeting of Mr. Gusmão, President of the National Council of Timorese Resistance, and Mr. Ramos-Horta, member of the transitional Cabinet of East Timor responsible for foreign affairs. Their contribution to the long struggle of the East Timorese people for independence is a matter of historical record. We salute them today, and through them all the people of East Timor as they seek to chart their own destiny.

The United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) has developed an impressive record in establishing an effective administration, assisting in the development of civil and social services and supporting capacity-building for self-government. In its efforts to assist with constitutional development and the rule of law, UNTAET has thus made a considerable contribution towards the establishment of an independent East Timor.

However, the primary challenges facing East Timor remain, first, preparing for elections and independence, and secondly, determining a constructive and supportive post-independence role for the United Nations.

We welcome the promulgation on 16 March of the regulation on the election of the Constituent Assembly. The national civic education framework that has been developed provides for the flow of information to the public about the constitutional process. However, we would encourage the early establishment of the district constitutional mechanism to allow the people of East Timor to provide their own inputs and feedback on the drafting of their constitution. We are aware of the importance this will have for building the confidence of the Timorese people in their future legislation.

We also welcome the UNTAET policy of encouraging gender balance in the new Timorese administration. The regulation on elections encourages equal participation of women in the electoral and constitutional processes. We hope that the training of women in political participation, decision-making and the basic knowledge of running for office will result in a substantial number of women participating in the elections and being elected to the Constituent Assembly.

The return and registration of refugees in West Timor still demand our attention, as we draw closer to the elections. According to the Secretary-General's report, the registration process scheduled for completion by 20 June is off to a slow start, and we are still plagued with difficulties associated with the registration of refugees. The report advised that the number of refugees returning to East Timor has declined from nearly 3,000 in March to fewer than 400 in April. It would be useful to hear from Mr. Annabi whether the reasons for the dramatic decline in returns have been identified.

My delegation believes that the prosecution of those responsible for war crimes and heinous acts is essential to the maintenance of and respect for law and order and can have a positive impact on reconciliation. Mr. Ramos-Horta has spoken feelingly about the reaction to the verdicts handed down in connection with the vicious murders of United Nations relief workers in West Timor last year. My delegation said then, and we say again, that justice must not only be done, but must be seen to be done. The fact that the prosecutor has appealed the sentences must, therefore, be viewed as a positive development.

These decisions have a direct bearing not only on the situation within East Timor, but also on future good-neighbourly relations between East Timor and Indonesia. We know that both parties aspire to this. We would also appeal to the Indonesian authorities to find a way of dealing with crimes committed before the August 1999 referendum.

We note that the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator has decided to lead a security assessment mission to West Timor this month. Mr. Gusmão has drawn a distinction between the internal situation in East Timor, which is under control, and the situation on the border, where the militia groups reign, as he said, with impunity. We encourage the Government of Indonesia to implement all the measures called for in resolution 1319 (2000) in order to create a more secure environment for the return of United Nations staff to West Timor and in order to facilitate the reclassification of West Timor's security status. In this regard, we would support the maintenance of the military component of UNTAET at its present levels.

Even after independence, the assistance of the international community will remain critical for East Timor. We must help the East Timorese to achieve their post-independence aspirations, including economic progress and the consolidation of democracy. It is imperative that the international community continue to provide technical and financial assistance and to assist the people of East Timor in creating an enabling environment for sustained economic growth and sustainable development.

The international civilian police will need to continue to provide law enforcement functions and training for the East Timorese officers. The development of basic infrastructure and social services will also need considerable support, as will the establishment of a credible and effective judicial system.

The success of the United Nations in East Timor will be judged not only on what was achieved prior to independence, but also on the capacity of the East Timorese to deal with their post-independence challenges. In this regard, we support the establishment of an integrated mission task force, as we believe this will provide the basis for determining the assistance which the United Nations can provide.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to express its support for and solidarity with the people of East Timor. We look forward to welcoming them very soon into the family of nations when they achieve their independence.

Mr. Gokool (Mauritius): On behalf of my delegation, I express to Mr. Gusmão and to Mr. Ramos-Horta a warm welcome to this open meeting, and I thank Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his briefing. Let me add that it was a pleasure and a privilege to listen to the incisive inputs and ideas on this very important topic. My delegation appreciates the fact that East Timor has continued to make progress on the path to independence. We commend the able guidance and direction of Mr. Vieira de Mello and the good work of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) in this regard.

From the report of the Secretary-General it is clear that remarkable progress has been achieved since the renewal of the UNTAET mandate in January of this year. The promulgation of the regulation on the election of the Constituent Assembly on 16 March 2001, the civil registration, the development of the national civic education framework, the launching of a comprehensive voter programme and the development and training of the East Timor Lorasa'e Police Service are indeed positive steps.

The efforts to facilitate the development of a dynamic market economy in East Timor will help create a business environment that welcomes domestic and foreign investment. We commend the UNTAET initiative in this regard. We welcome UNTAET's efforts to accelerate the Timorization process through the various training and recruitment programmes in the key sectors of administration and services. We appreciate the fact that in preparation for upcoming

elections to the Constituent Assembly UNTAET has begun a programme designed to bring more women into the political process. We hope that civil society organizations all over East Timor, and the United Nations Fund for Women, will continue collaborating with UNTAET in this respect.

We welcome the meeting between the Government of the Republic of Indonesia and UNTAET/East Timor Transitional Administration, held on 15 May 2001 in Denpasar, when many important issues were discussed and clarified.

We are particularly pleased by the news that the United Nations team has been disseminating information to the refugees about security and the political situation in East Timor as well as about the assistance provided to returnees. We believe that this will dissipate all doubts in the minds of those who are keen to return to their homeland but are discouraged either by lack of information or by disinformation put out by the representatives of the pro-integration groups.

In this regard, we welcome the request by Mr. Vieira de Mello to all journalists in East Timor to adhere to the highest standards of professional integrity, refrain from hate-mongering and avoid bias in their news coverage. We believe that Radio UNTAET has a crucial role to play in the forthcoming elections by educating people and informing them of the mechanisms put in place for a free and fair election.

In the history of the Organization, United Nations-sponsored agreements to monitor elections have proved successful in a number of conflicts. However, just as there are successes in United Nations election monitoring, there are also "half-successes" and even failures. As the need for impartial election monitoring grows, the United Nations must learn from past mistakes in order to fulfil its primary goal of fostering peace and security in the international community. The fact is that the people of East Timor have not known independence for nearly three centuries, and therefore any lacuna in the preparation for the elections on the part of the international community will add to their frustration. We believe that no effort should be spared in order to ensure that there is maximum participation in the elections. It is also important to ensure that the outcome of the elections is really credible.

While the report refers to many positive developments, certain issues of concern are also mentioned. The continued influx of refugees into urban areas, which is adding to the growing unemployment problems; the disinformation and negative propaganda campaigns carried out by the pro-integrationist groups; the widely shared fear that the political process may not remain peaceful; and, above all, the uncertainty in respect of the date of independence need to be dealt with as early as possible.

My delegation believes that political and constitutional developments in East Timor are matters of the utmost importance to the international community, as well as to the East Timorese people. Although much has been said about the process towards full and effective independence, what the East Timorese require is the peaceful transfer of power to the hands of the East Timorese, who must take responsibility for their destiny and continue the developmental process within the framework of democracy, freedom and justice.

It is axiomatic to say that for any democratic process to succeed it must first of all adopt an inclusive approach to accommodate the entire population of the country, without discrimination. We are happy to learn that over 42 per cent of the East Timorese population has already registered to vote. We echo the views of other delegations that the returnees should be treated as an integral element of the broader process of reconciliation and popular democracy in an independent East Timor. We hope that in the short time frame that now is available to UNTAET, this issue will be given the consideration it deserves. We appreciate the decision of the Indonesian authorities to conduct a one-day re-registration of East Timorese refugees in West Timor in June. However, if necessary the registration exercise should be extended to provide a longer period so as to make it more successful and reliable.

Two important matters that we now need to address relate, first, to what kind of relationship the elected Constituent Assembly would like to maintain with UNTAET after the election on 30 August; and, secondly, to the mode of international presence that will be required after independence in order to ensure the effective continuation of the democratic process that is put in place.

From past experience, it is clear that the exit should be steady and planned, taking into account all the possibilities for extending the support and help that

may be required. In this regard, the Security Council must ensure that UNTAET's mission has been successful and that there is the real possibility of timely and quality donor participation in the post-election period for financing of administrative and other constitutional mechanisms that will invigorate the Timorization process and guarantee the people full and effective participation in the day-to-day affairs of their own country.

My delegation supports the observation in paragraph 24 of the report of the Secretary-General in this regard — that is, to maintain the military component essentially in its present form until the East Timorese Government has established itself. We believe that the process of developing and training the Timor Lorasa'e Police Service should gather greater momentum and that it should not have to wait until the end of April 2003 before reaching full strength.

The international community must also see to it that the political will of the East Timorese leadership for a solid society based on the rule of law and precepts of human rights is not warped by unnecessary pressures.

Finally, my delegation is optimistic about the mission that the international community is undertaking in East Timor. We hope that East Timor will achieve the status of nationhood and join the family of United Nations Members in the very near future. Independence for East Timor will mean a lot in terms of peace and security in the region, and will usher in a new era in the popular participation of the people in the progress and development of East Timor.

Mr. Ahsan (Bangladesh): My delegation welcomes the interim report of the Secretary-General and the additional information provided by Mr. Annabi this morning. We also welcome to the Council Mr. Xanana Gusmão, President of the National Council of Timorese Resistance, and Mr. Ramos-Horta. We greatly value their presence and the statements that they made today.

We are at a point at which the territory is poised to embark on the path to independence. The stage for that event has been set by the promulgation of the regulation on the election of the Constituent Assembly and the process of civil registration, which is under way. Today's debate provides us with an opportunity to take stock of the situation regarding some unresolved issues, as well as those issues that might affect the course of events leading towards independence. We want to acknowledge the progress made in the recent round of talks between the Government of Indonesia, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and the East Timor Transitional Administration.

On the registration of East Timorese refugees in the camps, we note the resolve to clarify issues relating to citizenship as a consequence of the choice to be made by them. We also welcome the idea of creating a special fund for the payment of pensions to former Indonesian employees, and its inclusion in the joint appeal for the comprehensive resolution of the situation of East Timorese refugees, to be launched by the United Nations and the Government of Indonesia. Positive discussion has also taken place on the establishment of an air link and postal services between Indonesia and East Timor. The recent increase in the number of East Timorese students studying in Indonesian institutions augurs well for meaningful and mutually beneficial relations between the two societies.

We are happy to learn about the campaign for the dissemination of information to refugees on the security and political situation in East Timor. We view the decision to send a security assessment mission to West Timor as a constructive one. In this regard, we hope that the Government of Indonesia will extend full cooperation to the team and take steps that will facilitate an outcome conducive to the return of humanitarian personnel. Meanwhile, security in the camps must be improved through steps that the Government of Indonesia can take. The great reduction in number of refugee returns recently is of concern to my delegation.

On the other hand, very important steps have also been taken by the East Timorese side in the political arena — I am referring to the intention that we heard about today to disband the National Council of East Timorese Resistance and have all political parties sign up to certain principles to be followed in their future endeavours.

We listened carefully to the points made by both Mr. Gusmão and Mr. Ramos-Horta on justice and reconciliation. We fully understand their sentiments. Clearly, much more needs to be done to ensure that there is justice which is seen and accepted as fair. Justice should pave the path towards reconciliation,

and in reconciliation both Indonesia and East Timor have an abiding, long-term interest.

Cooperation between the UNTAET serious crimes unit and the authorities of Indonesia must be reinforced. With regard to the recent sentencing in the Atambua incident, we, like Mr. Ramos-Horta, hope that we have not yet heard the last of it.

We welcome the preparatory steps taken towards the holding of elections on 30 August this year. In this regard, we would like to ask Mr. Annabi about the role that even volunteers are understood to be playing in assisting UNTAET. They could be undertaking other tasks in aid of UNTAET in a cost-effective way, in addition to monitoring elections.

As regards the post-independence scenario, we welcome the setting-up by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the working group on post-UNTAET planning and the integrated mission task force. While the group continues its deliberations — and we are happy to note that it is doing so in close consultation with the local population — we believe that there is a need to strike a balance between international and local staff, not sacrificing efficiency.

We fully agree that the enormous investment made by the international community in East Timor should be protected. It is encouraging to note the good progress made so far; however, much more is required to be done to run the country after independence.

We fully appreciate the need for an international peacekeeping presence in East Timor beyond independence and believe that decisions will have to be taken on the merits of the unfolding situation. More and more, the affairs of the territory are going to be in the hands of the East Timorese. The run-up to the elections will be a crucial time and we wish the people of East Timor all the best.

Mr. Ben Youssef (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): My delegation wishes to thank Mr. Hédi Annabi for his exhaustive briefing. We are all aware of the excellent work and efforts undertaken by UNTAET in carrying out its mandate in East Timor, especially at this crucial stage.

I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report. My delegation is also grateful to Mr. Gusmão and to Mr. Ramos-Horta for their briefings on the situation in East Timor and on the challenges ahead in the completion of the independence process.

East Timor is heading slowly but surely towards independence. We must, however, continue closely to follow developments in the situation and to maintain our commitment to the process. The Secretary-General states in his report that East Timor's preparations for independence are well advanced, but he notes that much remains to be done if its objective is to be achieved. These two observations demonstrate that we must make further efforts to meet the aspirations of the population of East Timor to live independently and to safeguard the investments made by the international community in the future of that country.

After independence, East Timor will still need significant international assistance and the United Nations presence in order to ensure stability and to prepare for the future stages in the consolidation of peace in that country. The establishment of a working group to assess the need for competent international personnel to assist the future East Timorese Government is also an important step in that process.

We believe that it is necessary to reach a comprehensive final settlement of the problem of refugees, which remains a source of concern. This requires the commitment of all the parties, allowing for the acceleration of the repatriation or resettlement of refugees in good circumstances and for the onset of the registration process. The participation of refugees in the political future of their country is very important in order to promote reconciliation among all East Timorese. In this respect, we welcome the holding of a meeting on 15 and 16 May in Denpasar between the Indonesian Government and UNTAET, at which they discussed several important issues.

The security situation remains generally calm, despite some isolated incidents perpetrated by uncontrolled elements. In this respect, we believe that a reassessment of security in West Timor in order to modify the security classification in that region might help speed up the re-establishment and building of confidence between the two neighbours and to relaunch reconciliation among the Timorese. Furthermore, we believe that a gradual reduction of the military component and the international civilian police could be considered in the near future.

However, we are of the view that the Secretary-General's proposal to maintain the military component as it stands until the independence of East Timor is a prudent decision that should be taken into

consideration in order to discourage any intention to set back the progress achieved by the international community in East Timor.

Finally, UNTAET is a pilot project for the United Nations whose positive record to date requires us to make further efforts to achieve a smooth transition towards true peace in East Timor. The donor conference to be held in Canberra in mid-June will be a new opportunity for the international community to confirm its commitment in this regard.

Mr. Kassé (Mali) (*spoke in French*): I, too, thank the Secretary-General for his interim report on the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and Mr. Annabi for his presentation of the report and for the very useful additional information he supplied.

I also wish to welcome among us today Mr. Gusmão and Mr. Ramos-Horta and to thank them for their important statements and for their efforts for the independence of East Timor.

In the report under consideration, we have taken due note of the progress achieved in certain areas, including in the involvement of the public in the drafting of a constitution. We also agree with certain ideas and concerns put forward by previous speakers. In this connection, I wish to make a few comments.

First, although we agree that we must continue the process of preparing for elections, we believe that there is a great deal yet to be done in order to organize fair and inclusive elections on the date specified in the timetable. This is for at least two reasons that are linked, inter alia, to the issues of security and the return of refugees. The question of security is essential to the holding of elections and has been re-emphasized by many of us this morning. Paragraph 21 of the report stresses this issue and we agree with the assessment made in paragraph 24 of the need to maintain the military component essentially in its present form until the East Timorese Government has established itself.

We are grateful to Indonesia for its contribution to the relative stability in the border area, as mentioned in another paragraph of the report. We also feel that the return of refugees must be accelerated, with all necessary support for their broad participation in the elections in the best possible circumstances. We believe that, once again, we must encourage cooperation between the Indonesian Government and UNTAET in this area.

Secondly, we should continue to work towards the strengthening of the capacities of emerging institutions in East Timor, involving the entire United Nations system and the international community. In this regard, we welcome the work done by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Vieira de Mello, and the creation at United Nations Headquarters of an integrated mission task force to support and complete the activities of the working group on post-UNTAET planning. We hope that the donor conference to be held next June in Canberra will allow for progress to be made in the working group.

Thirdly, we continue to believe that we must encourage investment in East Timor in order to address the serious economic issues that are often linked to violence perpetrated by those left idle. Similarly, we encourage the ongoing exploitation of mineral resources under way in East Timor and urge those East Timorese living abroad who are able to do so to invest in their country.

In conclusion, my delegation takes this opportunity to pay tribute once again to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and to the personnel of UNTAET for their efforts to lead East Timor to independence, in accordance with the aspirations of its people. My delegation remains convinced that an independent East Timor, established in democratic pluralism based on the national pact referred to by Mr. Ramos-Horta, should be assisted by the United Nations and the entire international community.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): Norway would like to join others in welcoming our two important guests, Mr. Xanana Gusmão and Mr. José Ramos-Horta, to the Council. In Norway, both at the political level and within civil society, we have, for an extended period of time, attached great importance to East Timor. It was therefore gratifying to hear their presentations of the situation and of the challenges ahead of us.

We believe that Timor has been going through a difficult period of transition since the 1999 referendum. Through the common efforts of the East Timorese people, its leadership and the United Nations, much has been achieved in a short period of time. However, we all realize that some of the main challenges still lie ahead. The months leading up to the election on 30

August, as well as the immediate post-election period, will be of crucial importance for the future of East Timor. Norway would therefore like to underline the need for a sustained commitment on the part of the Unite Nations at this very critical juncture.

We take this opportunity once again to stress the importance of the August elections being free and fair and of all East Timorese being able to exercise their right to vote. The fact that a large number of the inhabitants have already been registered is encouraging. In that regard, we also welcome the initiative by the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) to conduct a comprehensive voter education programme.

We are all aware of the crucial importance of the safe return of the refugees from West Timor prior to the completion of voter registration. We would therefore like to encourage the Indonesian Government to carry out the promised refugee-registration exercise at the beginning of June this year, that being an important precondition for voluntary repatriation.

However, the security situation in the border areas and in the refugee camps in West Timor continues to be a matter of grave concern. Moreover, there is a clear linkage between the presence of militia groups in and around the camps and the rather slow process of obtaining a durable solution to the problem of refugees. Norway therefore welcomes the initiative by the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator to undertake an inter-agency security assessment mission to West Timor this month. This will hopefully be an important first step towards facilitating a greater degree of safe return for refugees. As far as security in the border areas is concerned, we would also once again urge the Indonesian Government to take the necessary steps to fulfil Security Council resolution 1319 (2000).

Norway is concerned by recent reports of politically motivated violence. We would like to take this opportunity to urge the East Timorese leadership and UNTAET to further increase their efforts to avoid increased violence in the period leading up to the August elections. As my delegation has stated repeatedly, we attach great importance to the instigation of criminal proceedings against persons who are responsible for serious crimes. Preventing an atmosphere of impunity, objectively ascertaining the truth and enhancing deterrence are, in our view, key premises for long-term peace and reconciliation.

Norway is concerned about the limitation of the temporal jurisdiction of the recently adopted Indonesian ad hoc tribunal for serious crimes committed in East Timor. We are unable to see any valid justification for that limitation of jurisdiction, which will leave the tribunal without authority to try those responsible for the massacres in Liquica and Suai and several other serious crimes. However, we understand that the tribunal's jurisdiction might be expanded to also cover the pre-ballot incidents.

The limitation of the tribunal's jurisdiction, combined with the mild punishment imposed on the offenders in the Atambua case, gives rise to some doubt as to the determination to bring to justice those who have committed serious international crimes. However, we are pleased to learn that the Indonesian Attorney General will launch an appeal against the judgements in the Atambua case. We are equally pleased to note that the investigations carried out by UNTAET in East Timor are moving forward, most recently with the indictment filed on 2 May against two militia members charged with committing crimes against humanity in September 1999.

Norway underlines the importance of continued economic support for UNTAET, the World Bank and the humanitarian and development agencies working in East Timor. However, we believe that the development agencies must make even greater efforts to channel investment to rural areas in order to ensure development in those areas.

Once independent, East Timor will clearly be in need of further assistance, in terms of both financial and technical support and a continued United Nations presence. It is our view that the composition of a future United Nations presence must be based upon a thorough and in-depth assessment of the situation on the ground. In particular, we believe that the future military and police presence should clearly reflect the actual security situation. At the moment there is relative stability in East Timor, but the situation remains fragile. We believe that it would be timely and pertinent to assess and debate the future United Nations presence following the Secretary-General's report to the Council in July of this year.

Moreover, we are pleased that UNTAET has established a working group for post-UNTAET

planning, focusing on the mandate, size, terms and duration of a future United Nations presence in East Timor. We hope the Council will be able to draw considerably on the work of the working group in its future deliberations.

Let me end by once again paying tribute to Special Representative Vieira de Mello and his staff, both international and East Timorese, for undertaking such a challenging task in a manner that gives us hope for a smooth transition to an independent East Timor.

Mr. Krokhmal (Ukraine): I thank you, Mr. President, for scheduling this meeting of the Security Council on East Timor. Our thanks also go to Mr. Annabi for his briefing. We welcome Mr. Gusmão, President of the National Council of Timorese Resistance, and Mr. Ramos-Horta, a member of the transitional Cabinet, and thank them for their participation today in this meeting of the Security Council.

We share the analyses of the latest developments of the situation in the region and of the activities of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) expressed by the members of the Council who spoke before me. I will abbreviate my own comments.

My delegation welcomes the interim report of the Secretary-General and the conclusions contained therein. It is certainly of critical importance to be guided by the need to safeguard the international community's considerable investments in East Timor's future at this particular stage of the political transition. The next step, one that may perhaps do more than any other taken to date to move towards the goal of obtaining independence, is the completion of the constitution by the Constituent Assembly and the subsequent holding of democratic elections. We feel sure that continued success in the political transition will depend largely or maintaining a secure environment.

The recent series of violent incidents that has been mentioned has raised concern that the political process may not remain peaceful. In this connection, my delegation would like to stress the continued importance of the security arrangements currently provided by the military and civil police components of UNTAET.

With regard to refugees, there was an increase in March in the number of refugees who returned to their places of origin, but the general situation has not improved significantly. We would also like to emphasize the necessity of quickly resolving the situation of refugees. My delegation considers that the reconciliation of the population of East Timor — a question that has a direct bearing on the return of refugees — will be extremely limited until those responsible for the major crimes are prosecuted in conformity with international standards.

We would like to join the delegations that expressed their frustration about the light sentences handed down in the Atambua case. Here I must also emphasize our concern regarding limited scope of jurisdiction for the recently established ad hoc tribunals over gross violations of human rights in East Timor committed before the ballot in August 1999. We are interested in further clarification regarding this situation and how it corresponds to the commitments made by the parties on the basis of the memorandum of understanding on cooperation in legal affairs.

In conclusion, my delegation will continue to support the work of UNTAET, whose activities in East Timor are a serious test of its effectiveness in resolving various kinds of problems.

The President: I will now make a brief statement in my capacity as representative of the United States.

I have been struck by the degree of consensus and the commonality of views expressed today on almost all the issues that have been touched on — elections, security, the transition after independence, justice and accountability. We think we are moving into a crucial period for East Timor. The United States fully supports the tight electoral schedule proposed by the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and the National Council, and we were pleased to hear Mr. Annabi report that registration continues, with more than 40 per cent of the population already enrolled, and that five political parties have officially come forward. This is welcome news to us.

The Secretary-General's report also focused on security conditions in the run-up to the election. We acknowledge his assessment, as others have. The situation remains unpredictable, and we support his recommendation to maintain the military component in its present form while keeping developments under constant review.

Like others, the United States also looks forward to the Secretary-General's report in July. We hope that that report, which should provide detailed recommendations on the international presence after independence, will contain a better-elaborated exit strategy with benchmarks. That strategy should include plans for transition from a primarily peacekeeping operation to a longer-term development assistance programme provided by a wider range of agencies, in consultation with the East Timorese, with peacekeepers progressively downsized as security conditions permit.

But I want to make it clear that we, like others, believe also that too much has been invested in East Timor to allow a precipitous withdrawal to destabilize the situation. To get this balance right and to have the best programme we will need close consultations among the Secretariat, the Council and troop contributors, and my delegation welcomes the formation of task forces in New York and Dili to achieve that result. We also look forward to the June donors conference in Canberra, where the East Timorese leadership will have the opportunity to present a budgetary plan showing projected sources and uses of funds over the coming years. A well-thought-out and realistic budget is vital to ensure continued international donor support.

I was glad to hear from Mr. Ramos-Horta about the concept of a national pact. We think that internal stability in East Timor can be fostered only if all political parties reject violence and urge tolerance and flexibility, with the recognition that divergent views are welcomed and accepted in a democracy, and we took note of Mr. Gusmão's and Mr. Ramos-Horta's comments in that regard.

On a final and unhappy note, the United States issued a statement expressing our deep disappointment with the highly inappropriate sentences recently handed down by an Indonesian court in the case of the murders of United Nations humanitarian personnel. As President of the Council, on behalf of members of the Council, I raised the matter with the Indonesian Mission. We have all welcomed the news that the prosecutors have appealed the sentences, but I would like to emphasize the United States conviction that accountability for past crimes is a crucial part of moving forward. Indonesia's ad hoc tribunal, UNTAET's investigation of serious crimes and successful prosecution of criminal cases against people like Eurico Guterres and Jacobus Bere are all part of that equation. We would like to see more progress. Nearly two years after the August 1999 violence, we must remain vigilant to achieve it, and I think we all agree that the East Timorese people deserve a reckoning.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

The next speaker is the representative of Sweden. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Schori (Sweden): I thank the President of the Security Council for organizing this meeting and Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi for his briefing. I also warmly welcome the presence here today of Mr. Xanana Gusmão and Mr. José Ramos-Horta.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The Central and European countries associate with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, as well as Iceland and Norway, European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

The EU welcomes the progress that the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) has made during the last couple of months in the implementation of its mandate, and the EU fully supports Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello in his efforts to ensure full implementation of Security Council resolutions 1272 (1999) and 1338 (2001). Our common objective of early independence for East Timor has come decidedly closer. The main political step in East Timor's transition to independence during the past three months has been the adoption of a regulation on the establishment of a Constituent Assembly. The EU remains committed to the success of the East Timorese transition to independence and supports the electoral timetable. We will support the electoral process in the area of election monitoring as well as in civic education.

The European Union is satisfied to hear that measures are being carried out by UNTAET in order to secure broad public participation in the constitutional development process, and it believes that the civic

educators could play an important role in the construction of an independent East Timor. We encourage UNTAET to continue these efforts. The EU also welcomes the voter education programme that is being carried out.

The EU is concerned about the rather slow pace in the Timorization process. Recruitment and capacity-building efforts need to be strengthened in all governance areas, including at the district level, in order to ensure the good governance of the country once full independence is reached. We would appreciate hearing the Secretariat's assessment of progress in this field.

The EU remains seriously concerned about the unresolved issue of the armed militias and the large number of East Timorese refugees remaining in camps in West Timor, and its implications for the security situation in East Timor. While the EU welcomes efforts by Indonesia to improve relations with East Timor, we call on the Government of Indonesia to implement all measures called for by the Security Council in resolution 1319 (2000).

Given the continued threat of militia activities, the EU notes the Secretary-General's assessment regarding the need to maintain a military component essentially in its present form until more detailed reports on developments in the security situation are available from the Secretary-General. It is also important that the international community support the build-up of the East Timor Defence Force. The continued presence of international civil police is important until the Timor Lorosa'e police service is operational.

The Union notes with satisfaction the efforts made by UNTAET, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and other relevant parties aimed at increasing the number of refugees returning to East Timor. The EU is seriously concerned that those waiting to return may not do so in time to vote in the elections for the Constituent Assembly in August. We urge the Government of Indonesia to finalize and implement its "global plan" for the repatriation and resettlement of refugees without further delay.

It is indeed very disappointing that the jurisdiction of the ad hoc human rights tribunal will be limited to acts committed after the popular consultation of 30 August 1999, thus excluding several serious crimes. The European Union expects that Indonesia will cooperate with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights as well as UNTAET in accordance with the memorandum of understanding to ensure that the violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in East Timor during 1999 will be prosecuted.

The European Union has already expressed its deep disappointment with the judgements of 4 May on six men in connection with the killings on 6 September 2000 of three international UNHCR staff in Atambua, West Timor. The brutality of the murders does not seem to be commensurately reflected in the judgements. They represent a strike against the efforts to ensure the safety and security of all United Nations humanitarian personnel. The Union welcomes the decision by the prosecutor to appeal the judgements. It is our expectation that the appeals court will honour the commitment of Indonesia in the United Nations Commission on Human Rights that the murders in Atambua will be dealt with in conformity with international standards of justice and fairness.

The European Union welcomes the working group on post-UNTAET planning, as well as the establishment of an integrated task force at Headquarters. We note also the Secretary-General's views on the need for a significant international presence after independence. We are looking forward to further recommendations in his next report.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Australia. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Ms. Wensley (Australia): Thank you, Mr. President, for convening this open meeting and giving us the opportunity to participate in the Council's latest consideration of East Timor.

Frankly, the level of interest in today's open meeting, both among Council members and non-members, is welcome and reassuring. It is very natural for Australia, as a country in the Asia-Pacific region and one of East Timor's closest neighbours, to be interested and engaged. But East Timor is at this time the direct responsibility of the United Nations, with a unique transition underway, mandated by this Council. The people of East Timor have placed great faith in the United Nations. They know, as do we, that continuing international interest and commitment is essential to

the achievement of a successful long-term outcome in East Timor.

In that connection, we are especially pleased that Mr. Xanana Gusmão, President of the National Council for Timorese Resistance, and Mr José Ramos-Horta, Cabinet member for foreign affairs in the East Timor Transitional Administration, are able to be here today. Their presence and their insights, their dignity and their passion, bring the reality of East Timor vividly into this Chamber, and they demonstrate more clearly than any briefing or report could do the nature of the transition process as it affects and involves the East Timorese themselves, the priorities and challenges which they are confronting now and those which they will need to address in the future.

I also want to thank Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his comprehensive briefing on the Secretary-General's interim report on the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). Australia welcomes the Secretary-General's account of progress in the transition process over the past three months, and we endorse his judgements about the current political and security situations in East Timor, particularly the view that we must maintain a prudent approach which will safeguard the international community's considerable investment in East Timor's future.

Continuing uncertainty about the security situation in West Timor certainly dictates this cautious approach. My Government remains deeply concerned about the West Timor camps, where tens of thousands of East Timorese refugees are literally stranded, unable to make a free choice about their future. This is both a humanitarian and a security concern. The prompt repatriation or resettlement of the remaining refugees is an important and pressing priority for East Timor's future stability and security. The fast-approaching election and the real possibility of political disenfranchisement for a significant proportion of potential East Timorese voters make an urgent resolution of the situation all the more important.

An end to militia intimidation, unimpeded access to camps by humanitarian workers, effective measures to counter disinformation and a credible registration process all remain key prerequisites for this to succeed. We welcome recent discussions between the Indonesian Government and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on plans for registration and repatriation, but we emphasise the need for prompt and decisive action. We urge all parties now to take whatever steps are necessary to move the process forward.

Australia strongly endorses the Secretary-General's view that the military component of UNTAET should be maintained at its current level for the time being and that UNTAET should review this question again after the election of a Constituent Assembly. As so many speakers before me have said, any review must take careful account of the security situation on the ground, in our view particularly along the border, but also in West Timor. In addition, it is Australia's view that any decision to commence a drawdown of peacekeeping troops must be based also on a clear assessment and understanding of the likely security needs in East Timor after independence.

We would also emphasize that any drawdown needs to be part of an overall exit strategy. This Council and the wider United Nations membership have consistently emphasised the importance of developing clear exit strategies for United Nations operations, whether in East Timor or elsewhere. In this respect, we believe the Secretary-General's report would have benefited from greater attention to this important issue.

If the United Nations and the international community make the right decisions now and in the coming months on political as well as security issues, the East Timor transition process has the potential to be a significant success story for the United Nations.

So far, UNTAET has been successful in establishing a sound political transition process. But this process is far from complete. If wrong decisions are made over the coming months, there is a risk, not just to East Timor and its people, but to the Organization's own standing and credibility. Cutting corners or costs may be tempting, especially when things seem to be going reasonably smoothly and when the Organization and its Member States have so many other pressures and crises to address, but such action carries real risks. It may actually cost more in the long run, dealing as we are with a situation which is yet fragile and an emerging nation which is clearly yet vulnerable. Although I am referring here to costs in the broad sense, it follows that the precipitate withdrawal of the support currently provided through assessed contributions would severely disrupt the transition

process and is something that Australia opposes firmly at this time.

Just as it is clear that East Timor needs strong United Nations support and engagement to bring it successfully to independence, so it has become clearer and clearer that the newly independent East Timor will require substantial international support, including military and civilian police components and support for civilian administration, if it is to become a self-reliant, democratic nation.

We strongly support the efforts of the working group on post-UNTAET planning and the integrated mission task force to produce an accurate picture of post-independence needs and available resources. The results of these planning efforts will be critical to decisions about the size, scope and administration of, and the financial support for, a post-independence presence. These are all relevant topics for the international donor conference that Australia will be hosting in Canberra in mid-June.

That June conference will also provide an important opportunity for international donors to renew their support for East Timor. One of the key measures for determining confidence among donors in this newly emerging nation is its approach to economic management. Fiscal responsibility is a fundamental element of effective government anywhere, and it will certainly be essential for an effective future East Timorese Government. In this regard, any further expansion of East Timor's budget significantly beyond the level agreed with donors at the Lisbon and Brussels international donors' conferences would be a matter of concern, given the implications for prudent financial management and possible longer-term debt-financing burdens.

I have consistently stressed to this Council, in previous discussions on East Timor open to non-members of the Council, the importance of the progressive transfer of responsibility to the East Timorese, which in United Nations terminology has come to be referred to as "Timorization", as the future East Timor Government establishes itself. Successful Timorization and capacity-building are both essential to the successful transfer of authority from the United Nations to an effective East Timorese administration. Frankly, not enough progress has been made in this area. For that reason, I was very pleased to hear this morning from José Ramos-Horta about the intention of the East Timorese leadership to intensify this process.

Capacity-building in the area of maintenance of law and order, including the gradual establishment of a functioning East Timor police service, is one critical element of the East Timor transition. Australia is committed to the maintenance of a United Nations civilian police presence in East Timor after independence until the achievement of a fully fledged local police service.

Justice, reconciliation and effective accountability are also essential elements of long-term stability in East Timor. We welcome President Wahid's recent decree establishing an ad hoc human rights court to prosecute human rights violations in East Timor in 1999, and we urge the Indonesian authorities to include all serious abuses of human rights that occurred both in the lead-up to and after the August 1999 ballot. Here I must add Australia's voice to those we have heard today expressing deep concern that the recent sentences delivered by the North Jakarta district court against those responsible for the deaths of three staff members of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Atambua were in no way commensurate with the gravity of the crimes. Clearly, as we heard so eloquently from José Ramos-Horta, this is not viewed by the East Timorese as justice. That certainly could not serve as a deterrent to others; nor could it encourage humanitarian personnel to return to West Timor.

The Secretary-General's report makes it very clear that, despite progress so far, there are still many uncertainties as East Timor continues its transition towards independence. I began by welcoming the continuing international commitment to the East Timor transition. I feel compelled to conclude by repeating that this commitment is not only welcome, it is absolutely necessary. Australia agrees fully with the Secretary-General's judgement that premature decisions to reduce the United Nations security or civilian presence in East Timor could undermine the considerable efforts and investment which have been made so far and could result in considerable long-term costs for the United Nations — costs which would ultimately be much higher than those the United Nations and the international community will face if we maintain the current steady and prudent approach to the transition. I think it is fair to say that over the past two years the United Nations has played an exceptional

role in East Timor. But it is much too early to declare the job done or the commitment to the people of East Timor fulfilled.

I must emphasize that UNTAET is a complex and unusual operation, conceived in crisis and founded on a strong political commitment from the international community. If it is to succeed, it needs ongoing commitment and continued, thoughtful planning and management — not just from dedicated people on the ground, like the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Sergio Vieira de Mello, and his team, or individuals in the United Nations Secretariat and United Nations agencies, but from the Member States, led by members of this Council.

We have the opportunity to get things right if we continue to make careful, measured decisions, based on the facts, based on the situation on the ground and based on objective assessments of what is actually needed. We also have the possibility of getting things wrong. We cannot afford to do that — not for this Council, not for the United Nations, not for the peacekeepers and humanitarian workers who have died in East and West Timor, and certainly not for the East Timorese, who are counting on the international community and the United Nations to help them build a sound future.

The President: In view of the hour, and with the concurrence of the Council, I shall suspend the meeting now until 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.15 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4321 (Resumption 1)

Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

Provisional

4321st meeting

Friday, 18 May 2001, 3.05 p.m.
New York

President	Mr. Cunningham	(United States of America)
Members	Bangladesh	Mr. Ahsan
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	Colombia	Mr. Franco
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Mali	Mr. Kassé
	Mauritius	Mr. Latona
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Singapore	Ms. Lee
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Youssef
	Ukraine	Mr. Krokhmal
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon

Agenda

The situation in East Timor

Interim report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (S/2001/436)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

01-37751 (E)

The meeting resumed at 3.05 p.m.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Portugal. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Seixas da Costa (Portugal): Portugal supports fully the statement delivered by Ambassador Pierre Schori of Sweden on behalf of the European Union.

East Timor has been a success story for the United Nations, but our collective task is yet to be completed. It is imperative that the Council and the international community do not fail in providing the necessary means the United Nations needs to perform its duty in East Timor. In fact, the coming months will be crucial for the successful transition of East Timor to independence. Portugal is fully committed to participating in that process. We also consider that it is of vital importance that the Security Council maintains its strongest interest and engagement in the birth of this new Member State of the United Nations.

Portugal appreciates the work that the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) has been undertaking in implementing its very complex and comprehensive mandate. In that connection, I would like to express my gratitude for the comprehensive briefing provided to the Council earlier by Assistant Secretary-General Annabi. We also commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, for the progress already achieved in areas as diverse as ensuring security, establishing a civil administration and restoring basic services to the population.

We also welcome the latest developments in the preparations for the election of members of the Constituent Assembly, including the efforts made in the area of civic and voter education, as well as in fostering the conditions for the participation of women in the political process. We see this election as the first major step on the way to political independence. Its success in the long run will depend as much on the capacity of the internal political forces to make democracy and good governance the driving force behind their actions, as on the support the international community will be able to provide to the East Timorese Government structures.

Portugal agrees with the approach taken in the report of the Secretary-General regarding the planning for the future presence of the United Nations in East Timor. We note the establishment in Dili of a working group for post-UNTAET planning. Indeed, a detailed evaluation of the needs of East Timor after independence is urgently required. We believe that the focus of this exercise must be kept on the conditions on the ground, where the input of the Timorese is best taken into account. Needless to say, any plans and strategies that are defined without the involvement and the views of the Timorese would be impossible to implement successfully.

In that regard, I am pleased that the Council was able to hear today two key Timorese representatives, Mr. Xanana Gusmão and Mr. Ramos-Horta. Let me thank you, Mr. President, for making that possible. I think the Council recognized their presence as a valuable contribution to a better understanding and assessment of the real situation on the ground, with all the authority that comes from their legitimate, historical responsibilities.

We also noted with keen interest the remarks of the Secretary-General on the security situation in East Timor, in particular those highlighting the continued risks and uncertainties. Portugal concurs with the Secretary-General's assertion that it would be prudent to maintain the military component of UNTAET in its present form until the East Timorese Government has established itself. Further, we believe strongly that any subsequent change must be made only on the basis of a detailed assessment of the security situation on the ground. In that context, we must keep in mind that the mandate the Security Council gave to UNTAET was to prepare East Timor for independence. The election of a Constituent Assembly is only one step in that process. It is not an end in itself and it is not the end goal of the United Nations presence in East Timor.

Let me also stress the importance of a swift and comprehensive solution to the situation of the East Timorese refugees in West Timor, as well as to the situation of the continued militia activity in that area. We fully share the views expressed by the European Union on that question and on the need to ensure that all those responsible for violations of human rights and international humanitarian law be brought to justice.

The substantial engagement and support of the international community will still be needed in East

Timor after independence. It is fundamental to ensure the continuity of UNTAET's work in all areas. The Secretary-General has rightly stated in his recent report entitled "No exit without strategy", referring to East Timor, that

> "In order to ensure that independence is successful and viable, a follow-on peacekeeping mission will be required to support the new State." (*S/2001/394, para. 42*)

We look forward to the recommendations of the Secretary-General on what this follow-on mission may look like and what the needs will be to support it. The recommendations should include a realistic assessment of the capacity of any implementing partner to carry out tasks that the Security Council has entrusted to UNTAET.

To conclude, I would like to say that East Timor is a unique case — unique because of the circumstances that brought about the United Nations presence in the territory and unique because of the complex and multidimensional, yet clear and achievable, mandate this Council has given to UNTAET. Our collective goal is to ensure that East Timor becomes a viable, independent and democratic State. We cannot waver in this endeavour.

The President: I meant to note at the outset of the discussion this afternoon for the information of Council members that Mr. Gusmão has an appointment with the Secretary-General at 4 p.m. and will be leaving shortly before then, but Mr. Ramos-Horta will be remaining with us for the remainder of the meeting.

The next speaker is the representative of Canada. I invite him to take a seat at the Council and to make his statement.

Mr. Heinbecker (Canada) (*spoke in French*): Two years ago we witnessed the signing of a tripartite agreement at the United Nations authorizing the holding of the 1999 election in East Timor, the first in a series of very difficult phases that the people of Timor had decided to go through in order to become an independent country. The elections to be held in August 2001 will mark a new turning point in this endeavour. We would like to pay a tribute to the members of the Timorese Government and the international personnel, who are working together to achieve this goal.

(*spoke in English*)

It is important that we all stay the course on East Timor. We recognize that in due course the scope of United Nations involvement will need to be reduced. We believe, nonetheless, that we should not act precipitately to reduce resources, military or civilian. We all want this operation to succeed. Let us proceed with circumspection and draw down only in such numbers and at such time as we are sure that our doing so will not prejudice that success that we are seeking. At the same time, we call upon the East Timor authorities to exercise reasonable budgetary restraint.

Let us not, however, gloss over the worst threat there is to further progress, and that threat is impunity. As many of us in this Chamber have said in the past, there must be no impunity for those responsible for committing atrocities in East Timor or anywhere else. We commend the ongoing efforts being made by the fledgling judicial system in East Timor to bring about justice there for past crimes, and we welcome the clear position of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and the Timorese leadership, rejecting impunity and pursuing accountability.

But East Timor should not be left alone in this endeavour. Indonesia also must live up to its commitment to bring perpetrators to justice. The verdict and sentences in the trials for last September's killings of three staff members of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in West Timor are deeply disturbing and distressing. Sentences of mere months given to those who openly confessed to murder can only reduce the confidence the international system has in Indonesia's justice system. The murdered UNHCR personnel were colleagues of us all, as much as the people around this table are our colleagues. They were there working on our behalf, and we owe them justice at least. The sentences for the perpetrators are an affront to the deceased, they are an affront to us all, and they are simply unacceptable. No one in this Chamber credits for one instant that these murders were anything other than acts of cowardice and thuggery. Treating them lightly only encourages further attacks. To paraphrase the words of our Jamaican colleague, justice has not only not been done, it has been seen not to have been done.

Canada endorses the recent statements by the Secretary-General, by High Commissioner for Refugees Ruud Lubbers and by UNTAET regarding the unacceptable outcome of these cases and the need for there to be sentences proportionate to the crimes. We are encouraged that an appeal to these sentences has been filed by the Indonesian authorities, and we hope that this matter will be dealt with expeditiously and effectively. Were the Indonesian system to prove unable to defend the rule of law and enforce internationally accepted norms of legal behaviour, the international community would have no choice but to pursue other means to ensure that justice is served.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Brazil. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Fonseca (Brazil): I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this meeting and Mr. Annabi for his presentation of the report.

We welcome the presence of Mr. Xanana Gusmão and Mr. José Ramos-Horta here today. Indeed, I think we are honoured to have them here today because they are no longer only Timorese leaders; because of their struggle for democracy and human rights they are indeed real world statesmen.

Allow me to express our deep appreciation to Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello and his team for the impressive achievements of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) in preparing East Timor for its full independence.

The political vision of the Timorese leadership so well represented here has been instrumental in this entire process. In this respect, we pay tribute to Mr. Xanana Gusmão, while fully respecting his decision to resign as President of the National Council.

The organization of the forthcoming election for the Constituent Assembly will certainly be the first test case for the embryonic democratic institutions of East Timor, and the support of the international community for the electoral process in all its phases, from the registration of voters to the certification of elected officials, is essential. We are confident that these elections for the Constituent Assembly will create a solid basis for sustainable democracy in East Timor. We also agree that civic education and training are essential components of this endeavour.

Political squabbling and dissent among opposing currents of thought are part of the democratic life of any State, and it cannot be different in East Timor. The most important point is the need for all political parties to remain committed to settling their differences through dialogue and institutional channels and, at the absolute grass-roots level, for East Timorese society to clearly reject any form of political violence.

In this respect, we are encouraged by the spontaneous drive of the East Timorese towards reconciliation, as mentioned in paragraph 18 of the report. The statements made today by Xanana Gusmão and José Ramos-Horta are encouraging, especially because of their insistence on the idea of tolerance as the foundation for a truly democratic East Timor.

As we enter the crucial stages of the transition to independence, the support of the international community becomes even more important. For its part, Brazil remains fully committed to the efforts to build a democratic and stable East Timor. That was the main thrust of the visit of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso to East Timor last January.

In order to underline the practical aspects of our assistance to East Timor, President Cardoso personally presided over the launching of Brazilian cooperation projects in the fields of capacity-building, professional training and education. As a follow-up to President Cardoso's visit, a Brazilian technical mission is currently visiting East Timor in order to identify opportunities for cooperation in the area of agriculture. We hope to build on our experience of South-South cooperation with a view to strengthening cooperation with East Timor and expanding the areas covered by Brazilian projects.

In the security area, the report calls attention to persistent militia activities in and around the refugee camps of West Timor and in the border area. We therefore recognize the importance of maintaining a credible dissuasive capacity on the ground. The report also highlights the need to reinforce the judicial system. Accountability is the keyword for healing the wounds of recent tragedies in East Timor.

The Indonesian Parliament's decision to establish an ad hoc tribunal to deal with gross violations of human rights in East Timor is a positive step. But the limitation later imposed on the jurisdiction of this tribunal would mean that massacres such as the ones that occurred in Suai and Liquica could not be

prosecuted. We are also dismayed by the very light sentences given to those responsible for the killings of staff members of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. In this case, justice has yet to be done.

We were very much encouraged to learn about the very advanced stage of planning for the United Nations presence after independence in East Timor, referred to in paragraphs 25 to 29 of the report. We note, however, that besides a residual military presence, which might be warranted, the bulk of United Nations and international assistance to East Timor will be concentrated in capacity-building. The future presence will essentially be aimed at the far-reaching tasks of nation-building — the establishment of effective democratic institutions coupled with the creation of economic opportunities for all.

Post-independence assistance to East Timor and the main thrust of the United Nations presence in the country, therefore, should preferably assume the form of a massive technical assistance and capacity-building project, stressing full ownership by the East Timorese of their own future. As a matter of principle, planning for the future United Nations presence should not be reported to the Security Council only.

As future efforts in East Timor will concentrate on post-conflict — or, rather, post-crisis — peace-building, this is an area that certainly requires enhanced interaction between the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council. In this respect, we regret that, for reasons that do not need to be discussed now, the planned meeting between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council to deal with precisely such questions relating to post-conflict peace-building did not take place.

We are glad, however, that that meeting has not been ruled out. We believe that it would be helpful to develop an operational model for coherent and system-wide action in post-conflict situations. We all agree that there is a need for a comprehensive approach, including key aspects, such as democracy consolidation, human rights and sustained economic growth, to address the needs of countries emerging from crises, and that a long-term development programme must always be an essential part of any post-conflict peace-building effort.

We now have to think about how to maintain a strong stimulus for the international community to keep its engagement and commitments for the development of East Timor. The statements of Mr. Gusmão and Mr. Ramos-Horta reassure us that the East Timorese leadership is on the right track. The challenge before us is to back their efforts by devising an appropriate institutional basis for sustained help for the prosperity of East Timor and its people.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Japan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Satoh (Japan): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the opportunity to participate in today's discussion. I would also like to welcome the two eminent representatives from East Timor, Mr. Gusmão and Mr. Ramos-Horta. Their participation is especially valuable as we enter the critical final stage of our efforts for the independence of East Timor.

My delegation commends the Secretary-General for his work in producing his well-considered report. As described in it, preparations for the election of the Constituent Assembly on 30 August, including the registration of voters and parties, are well under way. So is the consideration of a United Nations presence in East Timor after independence. But many difficult tasks lie ahead, and the future is fraught with uncertainties which, unless they are seriously addressed, could jeopardize the progress made so far.

Today I would like to underscore several points which my delegation believes are essential for bringing about a viable East Timor. Most importantly, the political transition must be effected through a process that is open, fair and democratic. We strongly support the efforts of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) to this end, most notably in drawing up, with the people of East Timor, a specific timetable for the election of the Constituent Assembly and compiling electoral regulations, and voter education programmes.

Japan, for its part, is sponsoring a seminar on electoral law, organized by UNTAET, and is considering other contributions in support of the electoral process, including the dispatch of electoral observers.

I would like to stress here that every effort must also be made in order to ensure that the electoral

process will be conducted in an orderly manner. As noted in the Secretary-General's report, there is a widely shared concern among the Timorese population that the political process may not remain peaceful. We therefore fully support UNTAET's policy of zero tolerance for violence, and urge UNTAET to ensure that effective contingency support will be given to the police by the military component.

I would also like to add that it would be prudent, as suggested by the Secretary-General, to maintain the military component essentially in its present form, at least until the establishment of the East Timorese Government. Needless to say, future changes in the size, configuration or mandate of the military component must be based on the objective security assessment at the time.

The issue of East Timorese refugees in West Timor remains a matter of serious concern. While it is important to give those refugees the opportunity to take part in the electoral process, the plight of the refugees in the absence of international humanitarian workers and the reported incidents of friction between the refugees and the local population are indeed worrisome.

We have to admit that the refugee problem is complex and difficult. It is for this reason that we would like to urge the Indonesian Government to continue its best efforts to resolve the problem by addressing the issue of militia activities, as well as the broader issue of reconciliation. It is equally important, of course, for the international community to provide necessary support to such an effort.

In this context we welcome the decision of the United Nations Security Coordinator to organize an inter-agency security assessment mission to West Timor this month. Here I would like to stress anew the importance of the safety and security of international personnel.

We also share the concern of the international community over the judiciary process in Indonesia with respect to the Atambua incident, in which humanitarian workers were murdered. It is evident that all parties concerned, particularly the host country, should firmly deal with those engaged in such hostile actions. This would in turn serve as a deterrent to future such incidents.

Violations of human rights and humanitarian law should be dealt with firmly, and Japan was encouraged by the steps taken by the Indonesian authorities, such as the Parliament's decision to establish an ad hoc tribunal to address gross violations. But we share the Secretary-General's concern over the limited jurisdiction of the tribunal, and we hope that the Indonesian Government will address the issue in such a way that would help ease our concern.

Lastly, I would like to touch briefly upon the United Nations presence after independence. It is evident that addressing the economic and social dimensions of the situation will be essential if East Timor is to develop as a viable sovereign State. As we have emphasized in the past, ensuring continuity in the provision of international assistance is essential in order not to jeopardize the progress that has so far been made towards nation-building.

In this context, we welcome the fact that UNTAET and the United Nations at Headquarters have established a working group and an integrated mission task force to draw up a blueprint for the future United Nations presence. We look forward to discussing the blueprint at the forthcoming donor conference to be held in Canberra in June.

The people of East Timor have come a long way on the path to independence. But they will continue to need the support and cooperation of the international community before and after independence. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to assure the Council and the representatives of East Timor that Japan will remain committed to help build a peaceful, democratic and prosperous East Timor.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of New Zealand. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. MacKay (New Zealand): May I first express my delegation's pleasure at seeing Mr. Ramos-Horta and Mr. Gusmão in the Council today as we consider the important matters covered in the Secretary-General's interim report. I would also like to express my appreciation for the excellent briefing given by Mr. Annabi this morning.

As one of the larger troop contributors to the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), with a battalion group and

helicopter detachment deployed in the Western Sector, we share the Secretary-General's assessment of the security situation in the territory. Recently, the situation has been generally good. In part this can be attributed to the robust response made by the peacekeeping force to militia incursions during the past dry season. The positive contribution of the Indonesian armed forces to the relative stability on the border during this period should also be acknowledged. But the situation does remain unpredictable.

We agree with the Secretary-General when he says the overall capability of the militias has not diminished and they remain a force to be reckoned with. Their continued existence in spite of Security Council resolutions calling on the Government of Indonesia to disarm and disband them is a matter of great concern to us. In this regard we recall that those responsible for the murder of United Nations peacekeepers Private Leonard Manning of New Zealand and Private Devi Ram Jaishi of Nepal have yet to be brought to justice. New Zealand looks to the relevant agencies of the Indonesian Government to expedite, in close cooperation with UNTAET, the prosecution of Jacobus Bere, who has admitted killing Private Manning. We expect also that others involved in these attacks on United Nations peacekeepers in East Timor will be arrested and put on trial.

We must also join others in recording our dismay at the manifestly inadequate sentences handed down to those who carried out the brutal murders of the three workers of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Atambua, West Timor, last September. The international community cannot hope to promote the safety of United Nations personnel when those who have admitted carrying out such acts receive such trivial sentences. Therefore we welcome the Indonesian authorities' decision to appeal these sentences, and we look forward to justice being fully served.

We also share the Secretary-General's deep disappointment at the extremely limited jurisdiction of the Indonesian ad hoc human rights tribunal for East Timor, and we join others in asking Indonesia to bring to account those responsible for the serious human rights violations committed in East Timor during 1999. The international community must remain closely engaged on this issue.

Across the border the situation of the refugees in West Timor remains unresolved. While we acknowledge recent initiatives by the Indonesian Government in this area, we urge greater expedition in implementing plans to register, resettle and repatriate the refugees in accordance with international standards.

Taking all these things into account, we believe the Secretary-General's emphasis on a prudent approach when it comes to security is the right one. This is reinforced when we look ahead to the political calendar leading up to East Timor's independence. The Secretary-General has provided an objective assessment of all the relevant factors. We agree with his proposal to review the question of force levels again after the election of the Constituent Assembly.

East Timor's independence is now not far away, yet a very great deal remains to be done. We fully share the Secretary-General's view that there will be a need for a significant international presence in the post-independence period. New Zealand wishes to see an appropriate and adequately resourced United Nations presence beyond independence, with core military, police and civilian administration functions funded by assessed contributions. These core functions are too critical to be left to the vagaries of voluntary funding, and there are established parallels elsewhere for what we are proposing.

We are pleased that detailed planning for the United Nations post-independence presence is underway in Dili and at Headquarters. The Secretary-General's report highlights the importance of this planning being based on a careful assessment of East Timor's needs and conducted in close consultation with the people of East Timor. We agree that the ultimate goal is to ensure that the new State can exist on its own.

We believe the Secretary-General described the situation now before us most aptly when he said in his recent report on the closure or transition of peacekeeping operations, "No exit without strategy", and I quote him here:

> "The essential requirement in the case of East Timor is to ensure that the enormous sacrifices of the East Timorese, the substantial investments of the international community, and the cooperation of the parties required to bring about a successful transition to independence are not squandered for lack of international attention

> and support for the new State". (*S/2001/394, para. 43*)

This is the challenge we collectively face and we must not allow ourselves to be diverted from it.

The President: The next speaker on my list is the representative of the Republic of Korea. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Sun Joun-yung (Republic of Korea): Mr. President, at the outset let me extend my congratulations to you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council this month. I would also like to express my appreciation to Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his report. I extend a special welcome to the eminent leaders of East Timor, Mr. Xanana Gusmão and Mr. José Ramos-Horta, and thank them for their presentations.

Since its inception one and a half years ago, the activities of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) have been quite successful in all areas of post-crisis management, including security maintenance and nation-building in East Timor. The case of East Timor is, thus far, one of the few success stories of the United Nations and the international community in general. We all remember the time of tough decisions faced by all the parties concerned in 1999. Enough has been done to save East Timor from its chaotic situation, but much remains to be done to make it stand on its own.

As we all know, this year is especially important in East Timorese history, with major political events such as the election of the Constituent Assembly and the establishment of the independent Government. Given the importance and symbolism of this mission, the continuous support of the international community is crucial. In this regard, the Republic of Korea is more than willing to do its part.

Allow me to highlight a few issues that my delegation finds particularly important for the sustainability of an independent East Timor.

First of all, the upcoming Constituent Assembly election is of paramount importance not only in itself, but also because it will lay the groundwork for future elections. My delegation is pleased that the East Timorese themselves have launched the preparations for the upcoming election, with professional and systematic assistance from the international community and with the United Nations Development Programme playing a central role. Despite some concerns about possible delays in the tight electoral schedule, we remain hopeful that the entire process will be implemented smoothly.

It is my delegation's view that, during the period of elections and subsequent debate on the Constitution, the most important thing is the maintenance of security and social order. To ensure peaceful and democratic *elections and unhindered debate* on the political system, the role of the international and local military and police components will be more important than ever. It is our hope that both the local and international security components will maintain particular vigilance in a concerted effort.

For the start of a new era of reconciliation and national unity of all East Timorese people, a solution to the refugee problem will be crucial. In this regard, we are pleased with the return of over 3,000 refugees last March and April. We recognize the efforts made by the Indonesian Government in refugee-related issues, and we expect Indonesia's plans for refugee registration to be implemented soon, without fail. We once again call upon Indonesia and concerned international organizations to expedite their efforts and strengthen their coordination to better address this complex refugee problem.

With regard to capacity- and institution-building, we highly appreciate the efforts thus far of UNTAET and other international organizations in all areas. For these diverse and time-consuming tasks, the emphasis should be on increasing the Timorese people's ownership of their nation and institutions, and on promoting the real participation of as many people as possible. We hope that the donors conference in Canberra next month will provide an opportunity to discuss in greater depth the mid- and long-term strategy of the international community to assist the people of East Timor.

Let me make some comments on the United Nations role in East Timor this year and beyond independence. My delegation takes note of the Secretary-General's report that there is a widely shared fear among the Timorese people about the uncertainty of the political and security situation this year. Bearing that in mind, we are concerned that the debate in the United Nations regarding the early exit of United Nations personnel might unintentionally send a wrong

signal to security-threatening elements. Therefore, we believe that it is very important for the Security Council to convey to the Timorese people its firm commitment to protect them until, and even after, independence.

The United Nations mission cannot replace the new independent Government of East Timor, nor should it remain there indefinitely. However, the report of the Secretary-General contains some important elements that deserve our attention. The Secretary-General pointed out that a self-reliant East Timorese police and defence force cannot be completed in one or two years. Therefore, we believe that the continued presence of international military and police components will be necessary after independence, though reduced in accordance with the developments on the ground.

It is our view that the reduction of UNTAET, particularly the military and police components, should be carried out in a gradual and phased manner. Before the reduction, however, a clever and clear exit strategy should be prepared. In this regard, my delegation appreciates the continuing deliberations of the UNTAET working group and welcomes the recent establishment of the integrated mission task force in the Secretariat. We expect them to continue an in-depth study on exit strategies that takes into account both the need for cost-effectiveness and the objective of fulfilling peacekeeping mandates.

We also expect them to present to the Security Council and troop-contributing countries a comprehensive blueprint on the post-independence engagement of the United Nations in East Timor. My delegation would like to emphasize the need for close consultation with troop-contributing countries during the whole process of preparing and implementing the troop withdrawal or relocation.

All in all, I would like to emphasize the importance of the continued involvement and assistance of the international community for East Timor so that the progress achieved at great cost will not be impaired.

Let me conclude by expressing my delegation's appreciation of the efforts of the Secretary-General and those responsible for UNTAET's mission. We expect the next report of the Secretary-General at the end of July to include practical recommendations on the future role of the United Nations in East Timor. We look forward to continuing to participate in this important debate.

The President: The next speaker on my list is the representative of Indonesia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Widodo (Indonesia): I should like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May and to express my appreciation for providing us with this opportunity to address issues related to East Timor and the prevailing situation in East Nusa Tenggara. Our felicitations go to the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom for the manner in which he conducted the work of the Council last month. Permit me also to welcome wholeheartedly to the Council our dearest friends, Mr. Xanana Gusmão and Mr. José Ramos-Horta.

Before proceeding further I should like to take this opportunity to reiterate and reaffirm the position of my Government with regard to building a strong foundation for future relations between the peoples of East Timor and Indonesia and to cooperating with the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) in facilitating the territory's transition to independence. To that end, the Indonesian Government remains fully committed to steadily and constructively resolving the outstanding issues once and for all.

Those efforts are reflected in the fifth round of meetings held between Indonesia and UNTAET, which took place at Bali on 15 and 16 May 2001, to address questions relating to registration of refugees, citizenship, pensions for former civil servants and agreement on airspace and postal services, including the Oecussi transit agreement. With regard to the latter, it has been agreed that the issue will be discussed at the next meeting Joint Border Committee. There was also agreement regarding payment arrangements for pensions, including the launching of a joint appeal for a special fund. At the end of the meeting, the agreed minutes were subsequently signed by both delegations.

With reference to the interim report, I should like to share some observations as to its contents.

On the issue of East Timorese refugees, the Indonesian Government along with UNTAET, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization

for Migration (IOM) jointly conducted an information campaign from 9 to 11 April 2001. We sincerely hope that this undertaking will expedite the repatriation process, as it has proved successful in providing the refugees with first-hand information on the situation in East Timor and in enabling them to make an informed decision as to whether to be repatriated to East Timor or to be resettled in Indonesia. At the same time, the refugees are entitled to the right to voice their opinions freely concerning the popular consultations, for this is indeed the true meaning of democracy.

We question the report with regard to the allegations of disinformation. The report refers to such uncorroborated sources as an Indonesian newspaper citing an unnamed local administration official in East Nusa Tenggara as if such actions were attributable to my Government.

Yet, the continued imposition of the Phase V security category by the United Nations has indeed impeded the return of the refugees. My delegation therefore trusts that the United Nations Security Coordinator will dispatch his team to the area no later than this month. Meanwhile, the registration planned for 6 June is expected to take place as scheduled. That is to be preceded by a socialization process that will take place from 21 May to 5 June, in which UNTAET is invited to participate. Similarly, invitations have been extended to 32 diplomats from Jakarta to witness the registration process on 6 June. This can be undertaken due to the improved security in and around the refugee camps.

Thus we fail to understand the assertion that the security situation "remains unpredictable". Let me assure this body that, for its part, the Indonesian Government has done its utmost in promoting security, law and order, and will continue to do so.

These results have been widely acknowledged in such places as the report of the Portuguese parliamentary delegation on its visit to Australia, Indonesia and East Timor from 22 February to 8 March 2001. Similar observations were made at the last Bali meeting by the head of UNTAET's political affairs department, Ambassador Galbraith, who stated that occurrences of security incidents have been minimal.

With regard to cross-border incidents, the responsibility to prevent such incidents from occurring rests with both Indonesia and UNTAET, as manifested through the holding of regular coordination sessions to maintain law and order in those regions. Regretfully, five United Nations peacekeeping soldiers recently entered East Nusa Tenggara and went so far as to question local Indonesian people and to check their identifications. Fortunately, the prompt intervention of the local military commander prevented the incident from getting out of hand. Indeed, there can be no justification for any party to overreach or go beyond its mandate.

On the issue of justice and impunity, let me once again reiterate my Government's unswerving commitment to bring to justice those responsible for human rights violations. It should be noted that presidential decree No. 53/2001 has established ad hoc human rights courts to adjudicate documented cases of human rights abuses in East Timor in 1999 and in Tanjung Priok in 1984. It is also to be noted that the implementation of the memorandum of understanding regarding cooperation in legal, judicial and human rights matters requires the consent of the Parliament to be in full conformity with the Indonesian legal system.

With regard to the criminal trials of the six persons accused of the killings of the three UNHCR workers in Atambua in September 2000, despite the verdict handed down by the North Jakarta District Court, I wish to emphasize that their trials have not been concluded. On the contrary, the judicial process is still underway, as the prosecutor is now appealing the matter to the High Court, with the possibility of again appealing to the Supreme Court — the highest court in the Indonesian justice system. It is therefore prudent for all concerned parties to refrain from making hasty judgements until a final decision is taken.

Closely linked to the problems of refugees and justice is reconciliation, which my delegation considers as the key element in resolving comprehensively the issue of East Timor. It is the firm position of my Government that a genuine reconciliation between and among the East Timorese will become the solid foundation whereby an atmosphere conducive to peace and harmony can be promoted, thereby eradicating the root causes of conflict. It is important to emphasize that reconciliation and retribution do not go hand-in-hand. To be truly successful, the process of reconciliation requires bridging vast differences while leaving past tragic incidents to history.

Therefore, true justice and stable peace have to be achieved in tandem and in a balanced manner.

Ultimately it is only for the East Timorese people themselves to determine the path to be taken in order to be one nation and people. Thus, it is incumbent upon the international community to support and promote such endeavours. In other words, its implementation must not be relegated to a future date but must be pursued as a matter of urgency. It is in this context that at Bali on 5 and 6 May this year the Government of Indonesia yet again facilitated reconciliation talks between representatives of the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT) and the East Timorese refugees in East Nusa Tenggara.

By promoting and enhancing direct people-to-people contact between and among the East Timorese, it is hoped that the refugees can gain confidence in the reception that awaits them on their return to East Timor. It is therefore legitimate in this context to also address the refugees' genuine concerns regarding their security in East Timor, particularly taking into account the recent brutal acts of violence against returnees.

One of the results of the aforementioned reconciliation talks was the request that UNTAET respect the political rights of the East Timorese refugees to participate in the democratic elections in East Timor and not exclude them for technical reasons. As East Timorese, it is their fundamental and basic human right to participate in determining East Timor's future. Moreover, we also welcome the planned visit of Monsignor Basilio do Nascimento to the camps by the end of this month as another step to further promote the reconciliation process. In this context, we sincerely hope that the reconciliation talks between the CNRT and Uni Timor Aswain (UNTAS), scheduled to be held on 24 and 25 May 2001, will make significant progress as a follow-up to a similar event held in Bali last year that was considered a milestone, as it was the first time that both sides had the opportunity to meet and foster harmony and cooperation.

Before concluding, I would like to allude to a specific point — that to satisfactorily resolve any dispute, including that of East Timor, it is essential that the reports of the United Nations be impartial, balanced, objective and based on reliable sources of information. Biased and contradictory statements of facts, as well as references to unverifiable sources of information, can also be prejudicial to the interests of Member States. Similarly, we would expect media sources and so-called unnamed sources to demonstrate a greater sense of ethical responsibility.

As Indonesia is in the transitional period towards full democracy, my Government has, through a process of dialogue and cooperation with the international community, worked to strengthen legal mechanisms. At present Indonesia is in the process of finalizing, with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, technical assistance for the enhancement of the capacity of the Indonesian administration of justice for the prosecution of human rights violations.

Finally, over the long term and in anticipation of post-UNTAET East Timor, my Government seeks to establish a durable, wide-ranging and mutually beneficial relationship with East Timor. Trade and investment, as well as cooperation in the socio-cultural fields, will be central to this effort. Therefore, the creation of conditions conducive to the interaction of the people of East Timor and the people of the neighbouring Indonesian province of East Nusa Tenggara is important, for the legal and political separation of East Timor from Indonesia cannot erase the reality of the centuries-old societal and family links between them. Hence, when UNTAET completes its mandate, it is our sincere hope that these links will flourish.

The President: I would like to ask Mr. Annabi now if he wishes to respond to any questions or to comments.

Mr. Annabi: I think the first question related to the reported lack of progress in obtaining payment of electricity bills and airport charges. I take that on board and will revert to it once we receive the technical information on this from UNTAET. I know they have been working on these issues, but I am not in a position today to give you a precise answer.

Ambassador Doutriaux of France had raised certain questions.

(*spoke in French*)

I would like to say that we did take due note of the questions raised by the French delegation regarding the structure and the strength of UNTAET. The Secretariat will address those questions in the report that the Security Council has requested the Secretary-General to submit at the end of July. For the time being, I only wish to say that some of our bitter experiences of the last decade have taught us that it would not be prudent to take the risk of jeopardizing

the considerable investments made by the international community in East Timor by prematurely reducing the troop level of UNTAET.

The recommendations in the Secretary-General's report of 2 May are based on a strict analysis of the potential threat that could set back the preparation process for the independence of East Timor. The Secretary-General is firmly convinced that any premature reduction in troop level must be avoided. He will nonetheless continue, in consultation with our Timorese partners, to follow closely, the evolution of the security situation, on the understanding that he would not hesitate to propose to the Council in due course any reduction that he might find realistic and reasonable.

Ambassador Doutriaux also asked whether the security assessment mission would take place this month. As stated in the report, the Security Coordinator has taken the decision to dispatch this assessment mission, and we still hope that it will be able to take place in the near future.

(*spoke in English*)

One question was whether refugees in camps in West Timor would be able to vote. The electoral regulation adopted by UNTAET on this is very clear. East Timorese who wish to register and vote in the elections of 30 August will have to come to East Timor to register and then to vote. But measures have been taken to ensure that registration stations and polling booths will be located close to the border with West Timor so that refugees who wish to vote would be given that possibility. UNTAET does not believe, however, that for obvious reasons it will be possible to organize the vote in West Timor.

I was also asked to provide more information on the integrated mission task force. This task force was established about a month ago. It has been meeting regularly here at Headquarters. As the Council knows, on the ground UNTAET has also established a working group that will interact with the task force, and a senior official has been appointed to go and support the work of the working group. He will shuttle between the task force and the working group in East Timor to ensure that the detailed planning on the ground and the policy decisions that will have to be made here in consultation with the agencies and departments concerned are in sync.

This task force includes a core group drawn from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank, and holds larger meetings as required so as to enable other agencies that can contribute to the planning of the post-independence phase to make their own contribution.

I was asked whether I could elaborate on the reasons for the decline in the return of refugees between March and April. It is true that there were very few returns in April. The fact is that, as the Secretary-General's report indicates, the situation in the camps is still not conducive to the return of refugees, and the intimidation and disinformation that have taken place are still having an effect on the refugee population in the camps. Of course, they are also still subject to the influence of militias that have not been disarmed or demobilized, as requested under Security Council resolution 1319 (2000).

I do, however, have a piece of good news in this regard; it only reached us over lunch, which is why I did not include it in my briefing this morning. As our colleague from Indonesia said, during talks held in Denpasar, UNTAET and the Indonesian Government reached agreement on the resumption of pension payments to former Indonesian State employees residing in East Timor. This was characterized by a member of the UNTAET delegation as a breakthrough. We hope that this agreement will now be promptly implemented because it could, of course, encourage refugee return.

A second development, which could also play a role in encouraging refugee return, is the agreement to include a reference to a planned compensation fund for former State employees in the consolidated appeal for West Timor refugees, which is expected to be launched jointly by Indonesia and the United Nations in July. This fund could also provide an inducement for the return of refugees to East Timor.

I was also asked to provide information on the role of United Nations Volunteers. We do, indeed, have a large number of United Nations Volunteers in East Timor; as of the end of April, the exact number was 664. They are playing an important role in the preparations for the elections for the Constituent Assembly, in particular by assisting in civic education and civil registration. In fact, when I visited East Timor in March, some of the registration stations were being

entirely manned by them. And, of course, they will also assist in the other phases of the electoral process. So we use them whenever we can in our operations, because they are obviously a cost-effective resource.

I think the last question was from the Ambassador of Sweden, speaking on behalf of the European Union, who suggested that further efforts should be made to increase capacity-building in governance, including in the districts. I fully agree that there is a lot of work to be done there. We should remember, however, that East Timor has been less fortunate than some other territories seeking independence, and that until recently very little attention had been paid to the training of East Timorese experts and administrators.

UNTAET is doing its best, but of course it takes time to create a generation of managers and administrators; it does not happen overnight. UNTAET will continue to consider this as an essential priority as it develops its plans and strategy for the post-independence period, in close consultation with Xanana Gusmão and José Ramos-Horta and their colleagues. In fact, when we met this morning before the Council meeting, they were stressing the fact that in their view there will be a significant and substantial continuing need for international expertise after independence, in view of the severe lack of qualified administrators.

The President: I would now like to give the floor to Mr. Ramos-Horta for any comments or observations.

Mr. Ramos-Horta: Thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the floor again. I will not add much to what the Assistant Secretary-General, Mr. Annabi, has already said in terms of clarification. I would like to make just two points, the first in relation to the political atmosphere — the political divisions and tensions — and the second in relation to our own efforts at reconciliation, adding to what I said earlier.

First, I would like to say that we take seriously the concerns expressed here by almost everyone regarding the political tensions and divisions. However, of the several incidents that took place in the course of 2000 and in the first few months of this year, we would consider only two to be politically related. I speak with direct knowledge of the facts, because I was called upon in almost every one of them to go and talk with those involved in the incidents and help resolve the problems. To my surprise, contrary to the rumours that first began to spread after the incident at the New Year, it started essentially when a group of youths attempting to enter a New Year's party were barred — they had not been invited. They began to throw stones at those at the party, and the situation degenerated into violence. Another incident involved a mosque. A group of drunken youths on their way home saw a car inside the grounds of a mosque. They entered and asked for the car, and, of course, the people in the mosque said, "No". The youths then left and began throwing stones, and stones soon began flying in both directions.

The most serious incident took place in Baucau, when a fight between youth groups resulted in the burning of the local mosque. The United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and the East Timorese leadership condemned that action, and subsequently Sergio Vieira de Mello took the initiative of mobilizing funds to repair the mosque. The Portuguese Commissioner responsible for humanitarian assistance to East Timor, Father Victor Melicias, accompanied by the most prominent Muslim leader in the city of Lisbon, travelled to East Timor and offered financial assistance. Subsequently, we all met with the Muslim leaders in Dili and Baucau. I personally went to Baucau to meet with the youths who burned the mosque to tell them that that was not enough in terms of our contribution — that we were not merely going to pay for it, but that they had to show their repentance by contributing manually to rebuilding the mosque, a condition which they accepted. That is what we did.

There was also an ugly incident in Viqueque that involved youth groups, in particular groups involved in martial arts. Strangely enough, many of the conflicts erupt after a soccer match — perhaps our youths watch too many European soccer matches. They are inspired by activities on the soccer field, and it is almost inevitable that after each soccer match the losing side does not accept the result.

Unfortunately, when violence starts, it sometimes takes on a political dimension when each faction calls on its own gangs, its own people. So I would say that this has essentially been the cause of 90 per cent of the violence that has occurred in East Timor. Fortunately, so far the political violence has been confined to one or two incidents.

Are we going to be able to maintain a relative level of peace and stability in the months ahead when,

of course, political tensions will increase? That is a big question. But to answer that, what I said earlier is that we are putting even greater efforts into the process of not only reconciliation between the pro-independence majority and the pro-autonomy group, but we — Bishop Belo and I — are also starting, with the support of Xanana Gusmão and Sergio Vieira de Mello, a comprehensive campaign extending many months into the future to promote a culture of non-violence, of tolerance. In this regard, we have discussed with the United Nations Children's Fund and the diplomatic missions in Dili how they can assist us by providing resources. It is difficult to address the issues of a culture of violence, of a people traumatized and accustomed to abuse by State law enforcement agencies for a quarter of a century, and it is difficult to suddenly drop the temptation to engage in violence.

We are conscious of the fragility of the peace in East Timor. Peace and tranquillity is a reality, but, as we have said a number of times, it is still very fragile because of all the psychological and emotional aspects.

In terms of justice, I failed to add in my previous comments that we have established a regulation creating a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. However, a new aspect of this Truth and Reconciliation Commission is that we intend to go back all the way to 1975, because, as I personally have stated on a number of occasions over the years, as has President Xanana Gusmão, we, the East Timorese side, cannot blame only Indonesia for what happened in 1975 and thereafter. The first acts of violence and the first resort to weapons in 1975 were by us, the East Timorese, starting with the civil war in August 1975. The first weapons used then were not Indonesian weapons. The first people killed in East Timor were not killed by Indonesian soldiers. Therefore, we must also have the courage and the humility to search back into our own history and to apologize to our own people. Only then can we have the moral authority and the tranquillity of mind and of conscience to demand real justice from others. This, then, is the task of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that has been set up and is broadly representative of the Timorese society.

I conclude by referring also to the political divisions in East Timor. This is what the United Nations, Peter Galbraith and all diplomatic missions tell us: multi-party; that we have to have freedom of expression; and that our National Council has to take it seriously. President Xanana Gusmão, in the time he spent in the Council — he went to the Council against my advice because he wanted to go — experienced a bit of the new climate of democracy in East Timor. When Xanana Gusmão resigned I stepped in and offered to lead the Council. Most of the Council members spoke against my leaving foreign affairs, and the next day I had to go back to foreign affairs because the Council members showed their maturity and their understanding of the importance of foreign affairs for East Timor. They said, "This is not your place", so I dutifully presented my resignation to Sergio Vieira de Mello. I essentially lasted only 24 hours in the National Council.

That was my first experience in the National Council and I began to wonder why the Council was being criticized. To me it seemed no different from the many experiences I had had in attending as a guest many parliaments around the world — the United States Congress, the Portuguese Parliament, the Italian Parliament, the British Parliament and a few others that we do not attend but watch on television. The National Council has been very constructive. It has adopted numerous regulations, and it takes its job seriously. Assistant Secretary-General Annabi also experienced the National Council in his recent visit to East Timor. I do not know whether he wishes to repeat that experience. I also do not think I will readily accept returning to the Council to participate in debates there unless it is absolutely necessary. However, it illustrates the positive developments in East Timor.

The crucial question that has been asked is whether we are going to be able to handle the debate and the divisions in a civilized way. We are, of course, working hard to answer that. I cannot say that we will succeed 100 per cent, but we are working towards that goal, so that the divisions, the conflicts and the debate remain in the realm of civility.

I thank you, Mr. President, members of the Security Council and the rest of the international community present today, as well as others that are not present, for your continued support. It is thanks to your generous support and thanks to the generosity of the soldiers of the peacekeeping force, the civilian police, the international civil servants, the non-governmental organizations and the United Nations Volunteers who are there that we have come this far. We have produced almost a miracle in a year and half. The task ahead is still great, but with the Council's continued engagement, as President Xanana Gusmão said a while

ago, we hope to return here in different circumstances to thank the Council as a sovereign State and to say that we did not waste or betray your trust or the resources that you have put into building this new democratic State.

The President: I thank you for those remarks. I also wish to thank Mr. Annabi and especially Mr. Ramos-Horta and, through him, Mr. Gusmão, for their presence here today. Your contributions certainly enriched our discussion.

As I said before when speaking in my national capacity and now say as President of the Council, I think clear messages were sent today from the Council, and I hope that those to whom they were addressed will heed them and take them to heart. I think it is appropriate also to say a word of appreciation on behalf of the Council for the effort being made by Sergio Vieira de Mello and by the troop contributors as well in helping to deal with this situation.

There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4322

Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

Provisional

4322nd meeting

Wednesday, 30 May 2001, 11 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Cunningham	(United States of America)
Members:	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Ireland	Mr. Cooney
	Jamaica	Mr. Ward
	Mali	Mr. Kassé
	Mauritius	Mr. Neewoor
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Tunisia	Mr. Jerandi
	Ukraine	Mr. Kuchinsky
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (S/2001/499)

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01-38827 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (S/2001/499)

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, document S/2001/499. Members of the Council also have before them document S/2001/523, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

It is my understanding that the Security Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution (S/2001/523) before it. If I hear no objection, I shall now put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bangladesh, China, Colombia, France, Ireland, Jamaica, Mali, Mauritius, Norway, Russian Federation, Singapore, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1351 (2001).

In connection with the resolution just adopted on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Security Council:

> "As is known, the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (S/2001/499) states in paragraph 11: '... the situation in the Middle East continues to be potentially dangerous and is likely to remain so, unless and until a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem can be reached'. That statement of the Secretary-General reflects the view of the Security Council."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2001/15.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.